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ADVICE

TO

MOTHERS,

ON

THE SUBJECT OF THEIR OWN HEALTH;

AND ON THE MEANS OF PROMOTING THE

HEALTH, STRENGTH, AND BEAUTY, OF THEIR OFFSPRING.

——— Auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,
Infantumque animæ flentes in limine primo;
Quos dulcis vitæ exsortes, et ab ubere raptos,
Abstulit atra dies, et funere mersit acerbo.

VIRG. ÆNEID. VI.

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LONDON:

Printed by A. Strahan, New-Street Square,

FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, IN THE STRAND.

1803.

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INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

THE preſervation of the lives of infants was the firſt ſubject I wrote upon at the opening of my medical career; after forty years practice, I now reſume it with increaſed zeal and pleaſure,—zeal, prompted by a juſt ſenſe of its importance,—and pleaſure, ariſing from the hope of its beneficial and laſting effects. I am ſure of being liſtened to with kind attention by the tender and rational mother, while I am pointing out to her the certain means of preſerving her own health, of ſecuring the attachment of the man ſhe holds dear, and of promoting the health, ſtrength, and beauty of her offspring. She will not take alarm at the idea of medical advice, when I tell her that my object is to enable her to do without medicine, and to obtain every deſirable end with-

out any painful ſacrifice. The path along which I propoſe to conduct her is plain and eaſy, the proſpects all round are delightful, and it leads to the pureſt ſources of happineſs.

The more I reflect on the ſituation of a mother, the more I am ſtruck with the extent of her powers, and the ineſtimable value of her ſervices. In the language of love, women are called angels; but this is a weak, and a ſilly compliment; they approach nearer to our ideas of the Deity: they not only create, but ſuſtain their creation, and hold its future deſtiny in their hands: every man is what his mother has made him, and to her he muſt be indebted for the greateſt bleſſing in life, a healthy and vigorous conſtitution.

But while I thus ſpeak of the dignity of the female character, it muſt be underſtood, that by a mother I do not mean the woman who merely brings a child

child into the world, but her who faithfully difcharges the duties of a parent,—whofe chief concern is the well-being of her infant,—and who feels all her cares amply repaid by its growth and activity. No fubfequent endeavours can remedy or correct the evils occafioned by a mother's negligence; and the fkill of the phyfician is exerted in vain to mend what fhe, through ignorance or inattention, may have unfortunately marred.

Several books have been written on the cure of difeafes incident to children. The natural effect of fuch publications is to excite terror, and to prompt mothers and nurfes to keep *dofing* poor infants with drugs on every trifling occafion, and to place more reliance on the efficacy of medicine than on their own beft endeavours. One of the objects which I have in view is to relieve mothers from groundlefs fears,—to teach them how to prevent difeafes that are almoft always the confequences of

miſmanagement,—to inſpire them with the fulleſt confidence in proper nurſing, and with ſtrong prejudices againſt the uſe of medicines, which do miſchief twenty times for once that they do good.

Quackery in the nurſery is not the only error in which I ſhall endeavour to undeceive mothers. The want of proper inſtructions at an early period of life betrays them into a variety of fatal miſtakes reſpecting their own health, as well as that of their children. Theſe miſtakes, and the means of rectifying them, form a conſiderable part of the following work. The language is adapted to every capacity, it being of conſequence that every woman ſhould underſtand it; and the rules laid down are practicable in every condition, except that of cheerleſs poverty. With the hope of removing this exception, I ſhall point out the moſt effectual method of aſſiſting women ſo circumſtanced; and I do not

not know any manner, in which humanity, charity, and patriotiſm can be more laudably exerted, or even a part of the public revenue more uſefully employed, than in enabling mothers to bring up a healthy and hardy race of men, fit to earn their livelihood by uſeful employments, and to defend their country in the hour of danger.

ADVICE TO MOTHERS.

CHAP. I.

HINTS TO WOMEN BEFORE MARRIAGE.

THE deſire of preſerving and of improving perſonal beauty, which diſcovers itſelf at an early period in the female breaſt, is wiſely deſigned by nature for the beſt and moſt important ends; it is a powerful check on exceſſes of every kind, and is the ſtrongeſt incitement to cleanlineſs, temperance, moderate exerciſe, and habitual good-humour. All that is neceſſary is to convince young people that theſe are the true means of rendering them lovely, becauſe they are the only means of ſecuring the enjoyment of health, the very eſſence of beauty; inſtead of ſourly diſcouraging ſo natural a wiſh, let us

point out the way to its full accompliſhment, and thus prevent many amiable women from taking a wrong road, and from deſtroying both health and beauty by an abſurd purſuit of the latter alone.

One of the firſt truths to be impreſſed upon the minds of young women is, that beauty cannot exiſt without health, and that the one is abſolutely unattainable by any practices inconſiſtent with the other. In vain do they hope to improve their ſkin, or to give a lively redneſs to the cheek, unleſs they take care to keep the blood pure, and the whole frame active and vigorous. Beauty, both of ſhape and countenance, is nothing more than viſible health,—the outward mirror of the ſtate of things within,—the certain effect of good air, cheerfulneſs, temperance, and exerciſe.

There is nothing, perhaps, ſo pernicious to women as the uſe of creams, and paſtes, and powders, and lotions, and numberleſs other contrivances to bleach the

the ſkin, or to produce an artificial white and red. All of them act with double injury, not only in deſtroying the ſurface which they were expected to beautify, but in poiſoning the habit, and cauſing a fatal neglect of the great preſervatives of life itſelf. A blotch or a pimple, however offenſive to the eye, gives timely notice of the impure ſtate of the fluids, and of the kind efforts of nature to expel the noxious matter. Ought not theſe efforts then to be aſſiſted by a judicious plan of diet and regimen, inſtead of throwing back the impurity into the blood, and converting the very means of health into the ſeeds of infection and diſeaſe? Beſides, lead or mercury is the chief ingredient in all thoſe boaſted coſmetics, and, being abſorbed through the ſkin, cannot fail to occaſion cramps, ſpaſms, convulſions, colics, and the incurable train of nervous and conſumptive complaints.

Beauty is impaired, and health too often deſtroyed, by other abſurd practices,

tices, ſuch as drinking vinegar to produce what is called a genteel or ſlender form, and avoiding expoſure to the open air, for fear of its injuring the fancied delicacy of a fine ſkin. Vinegar, uſed as ſauce and in moderate quantities, ſerves to correct the putreſcent tendency of various articles of food, and is equally agreeable and wholeſome; but when ſwallowed in draughts for the purpoſe of reducing plumpneſs, it proves highly injurious, cauſing exceſſive perſpiration, relaxing the bowels, imparting no ſmall degree of acrimony to the blood, and very much enfeebling the whole ſyſtem. The dread of open air is ſtill more ridiculous and detrimental. Look at the healthy texture of the milkmaid's ſkin, and at the roſes ever blooming on her cheek, and then conſider whether the open air can be unfavourable to beauty. The votaries of faſhion may affect to deſpiſe thoſe natural charms, and to call them vulgar: the heart of man feels their irreſiſtible attraction, and his underſtanding confirms him in ſo juſt a preference.

preference. Surely, the languid ſickly delicacy produced by confinement, cannot be compared to the animated glow of a face often fanned by the refreſhing breeze!

The woman, therefore, who feels a laudable wiſh to look well, and to be ſo in reality, muſt place no confidence in the ſilly doctrines, or the deceitful arts, of faſhion. She muſt conſult nature and reaſon, and ſeek for beauty in the temple of health; if ſhe looks for it elſewhere, ſhe will experience the moſt mortifying diſappointment: her charms will fade; her conſtitution will be ruined; her huſband's love will vaniſh with her ſhadowy attractions; and her nuptial bed will be unfruitful, or curſed with a puny race, the hapleſs victims of a mother's imprudence. She cannot tranſmit to her children what ſhe does not herſelf poſſeſs; weakneſs and diſeaſe are entailed upon her poſterity; and, even in the midſt of wedded joys, the

hopes

hopes of a healthy and vigorous iſſue are blaſted for ever.

The only way to prevent ſuch evils is, to pay a due regard to thoſe rational means of promoting health which I have already hinted at,—temperance, exerciſe, open air, cleanlineſs, and good-humour. Theſe ſubjects are pretty fully diſcuſſed in my "*Domeſtic Medicine*;" yet a few remarks may be proper on the preſent occaſion.

In laying down rules of temperance, I do not wiſh to impoſe any reſtraint on the moderate uſe of good and wholeſome food or drink: but under theſe heads we muſt not include ſpirituous liquors; relaxing and often-repeated draughts of hot tea and coffee; ſalted, ſmoke-dried, and highly-ſeaſoned meats; ſalt fiſh; rich gravies; heavy ſauces; almoſt indigeſtible paſtry; and ſour unripe fruits, of which women in general are immoderately fond. We pity the green-

green-ſick girl, whoſe longing for ſuch traſh is one of the cauſes as well as one of the effects of her diſeaſe; but can any woman, capable of the leaſt reflection, continue to gratify a perverſe appetite by the uſe of the moſt pernicious crudities? Fruit, in the ſeaſon of its maturity, is no leſs ſalutary than delicious. By plucking and eating it before it is ripe, you defeat the benignant purpoſes of nature, and will ſeverely feel her reſentment. The morning is the beſt time to eat fruit, when the ſtomach is not loaded with other aliment. Even in the evening I had rather ſee it introduced, than the enervating luxuries of the tea-table, or the ſtill worſe preparations for a ſupper of animal food. A meal of this ſort ſhould not be made twice in one day. After a hearty dinner, a long interval is neceſſary before nature can require, or even bear without injury, another ſubſtantial repaſt. Suppers are doubly prejudicial on account of the lateneſs of the hour, and the danger of

going to bed with a full ſtomach. Apoplexies are often occaſioned by ſuch inconſiderate and unſeaſonable indulgence; but its certain effects are reſtleſs nights, frightful dreams, broken and unrefreſhing ſlumbers, an incapacity of early riſing next morning, head-achs, paleneſs of aſpect, and general relaxation. Whoever ſets any value on health or beauty, will always make very light repaſts at night, and will go to bed early; that is to ſay, never later than ten or eleven o'clock, in order to enjoy ſweet repoſe, and to riſe betimes, with renovated ſtrength and alacrity, to the pleaſures and duties of the enſuing day.

Pure air and moderate exerciſe are not of leſs importance than food and drink. Women are much confined by their domeſtic employments and ſedentary purſuits: for this very reaſon they ought to go out frequently, and take exerciſe in the open air,—not in a cloſe carriage, but on foot or on horſeback.

When prevented by the weather from going abroad, dancing, provided it be not continued to fatigue, is the moſt cheerful and healthy amuſement within doors. The only ſedentary diverſions proper for women are playing on ſome muſical inſtrument, ſinging, and reading aloud delightful pieces of poetry or eloquence. Young ladies and mothers ſhould wholly reſign the card-table to old maids, who can only injure their own health, and who have no taſte for any other mode of ſocial intercourſe.

It may ſeem a little ſtrange that I ſhould think it in any ſort neceſſary to recommend cleanlineſs to the fair ſex: I am far from intending to convey the moſt diſtant inſinuation of their negligence in this reſpect; I only wiſh to heighten their ideas of its utility, and to point out farther methods of increaſing its benefits. They are rather too ſparing of water, from an apprehenſion of its injuring the ſkin, or giving it a diſagreeable

diſagreeable roughneſs. This is a great miſtake. Pure water may be truly conſidered as a fountain of health, and its frequent uſe is the beſt means of improving the ſkin and ſtrengthening the whole frame. The offices performed by the ſkin are of far greater importance than moſt people imagine. It is not merely a covering or ſhield to guard the fine organs of feeling from irritation or external injury, but one of the grand outlets admirably contrived by nature for expelling the noxious and ſuperfluous humours of the body. The perſpirable matter thus thrown out will of itſelf clog the pores, and relax the ſkin, unleſs care is taken to promote its eaſy eſcape by keeping the entire ſurface of the body perfectly clean, well-braced, and elaſtic, which can only be done by frequent waſhing, and inſtantly wiping the parts dry. Thoſe who have not a bath to plunge into, ſhould waſh the face, neck, hands, and feet, every morning and night; and experience will ſoon convince

vince them, that, the more they accuſtom themſelves even to this partial application of clean water, the more comfortable and enlivening they will find it. If miſguided tenderneſs has produced an extreme delicacy of habit as well as of ſkin, it will be proper to uſe lukewarm water for ſome time; and then gradually to diminiſh its temperature, till cold water can be employed, not only with ſafety, but with benefit. As a preſervative of health, it is far more bracing and more invigorating than warm water, though the latter may be often adviſeable in caſes of particular infirmity, indiſpoſition, or diſeaſe.

All women of delicacy and good ſenſe are ſufficiently attentive to remove any outward ſoil or viſible dirt from their perſon; but they do not all know, that a vapour, too fine to be perceived by the eye, is conſtantly iſſuing from the pores, the little orifices or mouths of which muſt therefore be kept clean and unob-

ſtructed. For the ſame reaſon, the linen and interior articles of dreſs ſhould be often changed, as they become impregnated with the perſpirable matter, and, when foul, would not only prevent the eſcape of any more, but would even have a part of what they had received re-abſorbed by the ſkin, and thrown back into the ſyſtem. The whole dreſs alſo ſhould be looſe, and as light as may be found conſiſtent with due warmth, ſo as not to increaſe perſpiration too much by its heavineſs, nor to check either that or the free circulation of the blood by its preſſure.

Among many improvements in the modern faſhions of female dreſs, equally favourable to health, to graceful eaſe and elegance, the diſcontinuance of ſtays is entitled to peculiar approbation. It is, indeed, impoſſible to think of the old ſtrait waiſtcoat of whalebone, and of tight lacing, without aſtoniſhment and ſome degree of horror. We are ſur-

priſed and ſhocked at the folly and perverſeneſs of employing, as an article of dreſs, and even as a perſonal ornament, what muſt have checked youthful growth —what muſt have produced diſtortions and deformity—beſides occaſioning various irregularities and diſeaſes. I need not point out the aggravated miſchief of ſuch a preſſure on the breaſts and womb in a ſtate of pregnancy; but I muſt notice a defect very prevalent among young women of the preſent day in London, who, though they have not worn ſtays, may be fairly preſumed to inherit from their mothers ſome of the pernicious effects of ſuch a cuſtom.

The injury, to which I allude, is the want of nipples. This unnatural defect ſeems to have originated from the uſe of laced ſtays; and as children ſo often reſemble their parents in outward form, it is not improbable that the daughter may bear this mark of a mother's imprudence, and may even tranſmit it to

her own female children. Where ſtays have never been uſed, the want of a nipple is as extraordinary as the want of a limb; and no mother is found thus diſqualified from diſcharging one of her moſt ſacred duties. But, in London, the inſtances are too frequent to be aſcribed to accident, and cannot, perhaps, be accounted for more ſatisfactorily than in the manner here ſuggeſted.

In my ſummary of the means of promoting health and beauty, cheerfulneſs or good humour is mentioned the laſt, though certainly it is not the leaſt in point of efficacy. It has the happieſt influence on the body and mind; it gives a ſalutary impulſe to the circulation of the blood, keeps all the vital organs in eaſy and agreeable play, renders the outward deportment highly pleaſing, while the perpetual ſunſhine within ſpreads a faſcinating lovelineſs over the countenance. Its oppoſite, peeviſhneſs, or ill humour, embitters life, ſaps the conſtitution, and

is more fatal to beauty than the ſmall-pox, becauſe its ravages are more certain, more diſguſting, and more permanent.

Such are the chief points which I wiſh to impreſs upon the minds of women before marriage. Objects of ſo much importance in every ſtage or period of life, are deſerving of peculiar regard when an union of the ſexes is propoſed. It is little ſhort of intentional murder on the part of a weak, languid, nervous, or deformed woman, to approach the marriage-bed. Improper paſſions may urge her to become a wife; but ſhe is wholly unfit to become a mother. She riſks her own life,—ſhe diſappoints the natural wiſhes of a huſband,—and ſhould ſhe have children, her puny, ſickly offſpring, as I before obſerved, will have little cauſe to thank her for their wretched exiſtence. The evil is not confined to her own family; ſociety at large is ma-

terially injured; its well-being depends on the vigour of the members that compoſe it; and univerſal experience has fully proved, that the frame of a huſbandman or a hero is not to be moulded or cheriſhed in the womb of debility, and that the bold eagle will never be brought forth by the timid dove.

I cannot conclude theſe hints without adding a few words on the choice of a huſband. Having endeavoured to prove that health is ſo indiſpenſable a requiſite in females before marriage, they may well ſuppoſe that I deem it no leſs neceſſary in the other ſex. I am always ſorry to ſee that precious bleſſing ſacrificed in an alliance with infirmity, or youth and beauty conſigned to the frozen arms of age. Miſery muſt be the inevitable conſequence of ſuch unnatural matches. But I fear that my remonſtrances will have little effect in reſtraining the undue exerciſe of parental authority, or in attempting to

open

open the eyes of a woman to her certain deſtruction, when ſhe ſuffers herſelf to be dazzled by the ſplendor of riches, or charmed by the ſound of an empty title.

CHAP. II.

RULES OF CONDUCT DURING PREGNANCY.

AFTER what I have already ſaid on the ſubject of health, I hope I need not make uſe of any new arguments to convince women of its increaſed importance the moment they conceive,—a moment, from which they may begin to date the real perfection of their being. Nature has now entered upon her grandeſt work, and nothing is wanting but the mother's care to complete it. The exertions of this care are not left to whim, to caprice, or even to the ſtrong impulſes of parental love. The ſelf-preſervation of the mother is made dependent on the proper diſcharge of her duty: her own health, her ſtrength, her very life are cloſely entwined with the well-being of the embryo in her womb;

womb; nor can ſhe be guilty of the leaſt neglect, without equal danger and injury to both.

I am ſorry to think that any awful warning ſhould be neceſſary to check the commiſſion of ſo wicked an outrage upon nature, as an attempt to procure abortion. This can never be effected without either the probable death of the mother, or the certain ruin of her conſtitution: the ſtimulants which are uſed to force the womb prematurely to diſcharge its ſacred depoſit, muſt inflame the parts ſo as to cauſe a mortification; or will convulſe and enfeeble the whole ſyſtem in ſuch a manner, as to leave no chance of future health or enjoyment to the deſtroyer of her own child.

In the ancient hiſtory of the Jews, we read of two harlots warmly contending for a living child. How different is the caſe with our women of that deſcription!—Their wiſh, if they conceive, is to pre-

prevent or to deſtroy the life of the embryo, even at the riſk of their own. Is a monſter of this ſort to be pitied, when, in the execution of her ſhocking purpoſe, ſhe brings on thoſe deadly ſymptoms which muſt ſoon cloſe her guilty career?

The unnatural mother, however, is not always the only monſter concerned in thoſe ſcenes of horror: her baſe ſeducer is too often the adviſer of the deſperate reſolution, and crowns his guilty joys with double murder! Another ruffian, ſome male or female practitioner in midwifery, is alſo engaged in the helliſh plot, and lends a hand to perpetrate the foul deed, alike regardleſs of the mother's danger, and deaf to the cries of infant blood! I never read, without ſhuddering, any advertiſement, of temporary retreats or pretended accommodations for pregnant ladies: I always view it as a wicked allurement to unfortunate women, and as a daring hint

hint from ſome ready aſſaſſin of innocence. It is not long ſince one of thoſe wretches was convicted of killing both mother and child; and I have myſelf ſeen a great number of embryos exhibited by a man, who, I firmly believe, obtained them in this way.

The dread of public ſhame or of private ſcorn, though no excuſe for murder, may urge the victim of ſeduction to commit a crime at once ſo abominable and ſo dangerous. But is it poſſible that a married woman ſhould madly and wickedly attempt to procure abortion, merely from an apprehenſion of a large family, or to avoid the trouble of bearing and bringing up children? Can ſhe hope to taſte the joys, and yet deſtroy the fruits of love? What a frantic idea!—The ſame poiſon puts an end to both. And in vain does ſhe flatter herſelf that her guilt is concealed, or that no law exiſts to puniſh it. The laws of nature are never violated with impunity; and,

and, in the caſes alluded to, the criminal is made at once to feel the horrors of late remorſe, and the keeneſt pangs of a torn, diſordered, and incurable frame.

But ſuppoſe that a miſcarriage brought about by ſuch deteſtable means did not endanger the health and life of the mother: ſuppoſe that an act held in ſuch juſt abhorrence, both by earth and heaven, could poſſibly eſcape puniſhment: ſuppoſe a woman, deaf to the cries of nature, incapable of tender emotions, and fearleſs of any immediate ſufferings in her own perſon.—I have one argument more to make her ſtop her murderous hand: perhaps the embryo, which ſhe is now going to deſtroy, would, if cheriſhed in her womb, and afterwards reared with due attention, prove the ſweeteſt comfort of her future years, and repay all her maternal care with boundleſs gratitude. It may be a daughter to nurſe her in her old age, or a ſon to

ſwell

ſwell her heart with joy at his honourable and ſucceſsful career in life. I only wiſh her to pauſe for a moment, and to conſider, that, by the wilful extinction of the babe in her womb, all her faireſt hopes are extinguiſhed alſo, and that preſent danger is aggravated by the certainty of future deſpair.

A wiſh to prevent even one act of ſo much horror has induced me to dwell on this unpleaſant part of my ſubject. But folly, ignorance, and careleſſneſs, are often productive of as fatal effects as a criminal deſign; and though I may not be able to reſtrain the latter, yet I hope the former may be corrected by better information. With this view, I ſhall make ſome farther remarks on the great preſervatives of health mentioned in the preceding chapter. The general rules there laid down hold good in every condition of life; but a ſtate of pregnancy requires a greater degree of care

and

and judgment in their practical application.

Cheerfulneſs, or good-humour, which before was placed laſt in the order of diſcuſſion, muſt now take the lead, being ſuperior to all other conſiderations during pregnancy. In this ſtate, more than in any other, the changes of bodily health ſeem to be almoſt wholly under the immediate influence of the mind; and the mother appears well or ill, according as ſhe gives way to pleaſant or to fretful emotions. I admire that fragment of ancient hiſtory, in which we are informed, that the caſtern ſages, while their wives were pregnant, took care to keep them conſtantly tranquil and cheerful, by ſweet and innocent amuſements, to the end, that, from the mother's womb, the fruit might receive no impreſſions but what were pleaſing, mild, and agreeable to order. So fine a leſſon of wiſdom, and of parental as well

well as conjugal love and duty, cannot be too clofely ftudied, or too diligently carried into practice, by the hufband who fets any value on his wife's health, —who wifhes to fecure her affection and gratitude,—and who pants for the exquifite happinefs of being the father of a lively, well-formed, and vigorous child.

It is during pregnancy alfo that every woman fhould be doubly attentive to preferve the utmoft fweetnefs and ferenity of temper,—to difpel the glooms of fear or melancholy,—to calm the rifing guffs of anger,—and to keep every other unruly paffion or defire under the fteady control of mildnefs and reafon. The joy of becoming a mother, and the anticipated pleafure of prefenting a fond hufband with the deareft pledge of mutual love, ought naturally to increafe her cheerfulnefs, and would certainly produce that effect, were not thofe emotions too often checked by a fruitlefs alarm

alarm at the fancied danger of her ſituation. It is therefore of the utmoſt importance to convince her, that her terrors are groundleſs; —that pregnancy is not a ſtate of infirmity or danger, but affords the ſtrongeſt preſumption of health and ſecurity;—that the few inſtances ſhe may have known of miſcarriage or of death, were owing to the improper conduct of the women themſelves, beſides being too inconſiderable to be compared with the countleſs millions of perſons in the like condition, who enjoy both then and afterwards a greater degree of health than they ever before experienced;—and, laſtly, that the changes which ſhe feels in herſelf, and her quick perceptions of uneaſineſs, are not ſymptoms of weakneſs, but the conſequences of an increaſed ſenſibility of her womb, and timely warnings of the effects of indiſcretion or intemperance.

A late writer on this ſubject very juſtly obſerves, that, when ſuch an increaſe

creaſe of ſenſibility takes place in a woman of a very irritable frame and temper, it muſt certainly aggravate her former complaints and weakneſſes, and produce a variety of feveriſh effects. She grows more impatient and fretful: her fears, as well as her angry paſſions, are more readily excited: the body neceſſarily ſuffers with the mind: debility, emaciation, and many hectic ſymptoms, follow. But the only rational inference to be drawn from theſe facts is, that the feelings are more acute in a ſtate of pregnancy; and that any previous indiſpoſition, either of body or mind, now requires a more than ordinary degree of care and tenderneſs.

Though the chilling influence of fear, and the depreſſions of melancholy, are very injurious to the mother's health and to the growth of the *fœtus* in her womb; yet anger is a ſtill more formidable enemy. It convulſes the whole ſyſtem, and forces the blood into the

face and head with great impetuoſity. The danger is increaſed by the uſual fulneſs of the habit in pregnancy. When the blood runs high and rapid, a veſſel may burſt, and in ſuch a part as to terminate, or bring into great peril, the exiſtence of both the mother and the child. Caſes often occur of the burſting of a blood-veſſel in the brain, occaſioned by a violent guſt of paſſion. How much more likely is it to rupture thoſe tender veſſels that connect the mother and child! Yet to the latter this is certain death. I knew a female who had the *aorta*, or great artery, ſo diſtended that it forced its way through the breaſt-bone, and roſe externally to the ſize of a quart bottle. This extraordinary diſtenſion was chiefly owing to the violence of her temper. I have alſo met with a moſt ſhocking inſtance of a fighting woman, who, in the paroxyſm of rage and revenge, brought forth a child, with all its bowels hanging out of its little body. There is no doubt but that

that paſſionate women are moſt ſubject to abortions, which are oftener owing to outward violence or internal tumult, than to any other cauſe. An accident of this ſort is the more alarming, as the woman, who once miſcarries, has the greateſt reaſon ever after to dread the repetition of the ſame misfortune.

Cards, or any kind of gaming, at all times the worſt of amuſements, ſhould be particularly avoided during pregnancy. The temper is then more liable to be ruffled by the changes of luck, and the mind to be fatigued by conſtant exertions of the judgment and memory. Old maids, as I before obſerved, are the only claſs of females, who may be allowed to ſpend ſome of their tedious hours in ſuch abſurd and ſuch unhealthy paſtimes.

Without entering into farther details, it will be eaſy for the ſenſible mother to apply the principle here laid down to

every paſſion and propenſity which may tend to excite painful emotions of the mind, and to impair in the ſame degree the health of the body. She muſt learn to keep even natural deſires within due bounds, leſt pleaſure itſelf, if immoderately indulged, may produce the ſame effect as pain. Among many excellent hints to pregnant ladies contained in a Latin poem tranſlated by Dr. TYTLER, we meet with the following juſt admonition:

Subdue deſires; nor let your troubled mind,
Immod'rate love, or fear, or ſadneſs find:
Give not yourſelves ev'n to the nuptial joy,
Or aught that may your ſtrength or peace deſtroy.

And again,

——Curb each looſe deſire,
Leſt added fuel quench the former fire:
Leſt ye ſhould loſe the fruits of pleaſure gone,
And love itſelf undo what love had done.

The enjoyments of the table muſt alſo be kept under the nice controul of moderation,

deration, in a ſtate of pregnancy. Any exceſs, or any deficiency of proper ſupplies, will now be moſt ſeverely felt. The well-being of both the mother and child will depend on her purſuing a happy medium between painful reſtraint or unneceſſary ſelf-denial, on the one hand, and the indulgence of a depraved or intemperate appetite on the other. But, as the natural deſire of aliment increaſes with the growth and increaſing wants of the child, it will be proper to conſider thoſe variations as they appear in the different ſtages of pregnancy; and to ſhew how far it may be alſo adviſeable to gratify the involuntary, and often very wild and whimſical deſires, which are known by the name of *longings*.

Before I enter into particular details concerning the diet of pregnant ladies, I muſt beg leave to urge with increaſed earneſtneſs my former general prohibition againſt ſtrong liquors, unripe fruits,

paſtry, and all ſorts of food that are high-ſeaſoned, inflammatory, or hard of digeſtion. If theſe are improper before marriage, they muſt be doubly pernicious afterwards, when they may not only injure the mother's health, but poiſon, infect, or impoveriſh the fountain of life and nutriment, whence her child is to derive ſupport. Every female, therefore, will ſee the importance of guarding againſt bad habits or the indulgence of a vitiated taſte at an early period; that ſhe may not have any painful reſtraints to ſubject herſelf to when a mother, or be then under the neceſſity of making any great change from her former mode of living.

I have already laid it down as a fixed principle, that a ſtate of pregnancy is not a ſtate of infirmity or diſeaſe, but of increaſed ſenſibility; and that the changes which a woman then feels in herſelf, though ſometimes accompanied with a little pain or uneaſineſs, are but notices

notices of her ſituation, or warnings againſt indiſcretion or intemperance. Let us now apply this principle to the regulations of diet, and we ſhall find it to be the moſt unerring guide to pregnant women in all their conduct, but more eſpecially in the choice and quantity of their food and drink.

The whole term of pregnancy may be divided into two nearly equal parts, the one comprehending the four months that immediately follow conception, and the other, the remaining five months that precede delivery. During the firſt period, when there is in moſt women a ſtrong tendency to an extreme fulneſs of the habit, nature gives the plaineſt cautions againſt improper indulgence, by a weakneſs of the ſtomach, frequent returns of nauſea and vomiting, headachs, coſtiveneſs, and the other ſymptoms and effects of indigeſtion. It is a very abſurd, and a very fatal miſtake, to ſuppoſe that women are then in greater

need of nouriſhing things; when, on the contrary, in conſequence of the ceaſing of the *menſes*, and the redundancy of blood in the ſyſtem, the ſtricteſt temperance is not only proper, but abſolutely neceſſary to prevent illneſs. When this is neglected,—when no regard is paid to the hints of the ſtate of the ſtomach and of the whole habit, ſo kindly given by nature,—bleeding becomes the only expedient to ſave the life of the thoughtleſs or obſtinate glutton; but ſhe ſhould remember, that it is her own intemperance which renders that operation adviſeable.

The alledged or fancied wants of the child may be urged as a plea for ſome little exceſs, or an incitement to more than ordinary gratification; but the frivolity of ſuch an excuſe will appear, upon conſidering, that the *fœtus*, for the firſt two months, does not exceed a hen's egg in ſize, and that its growth for the next two months, even till the

aſcent

aſcent of the womb, or the uſual time of *quickening*, is ſo ſmall as to require very little nouriſhment. This is amply ſupplied from the natural fulneſs of the ſyſtem before noticed, without the dangerous aid of the mother's intemperance. It requires but a moment's reflection, on the part of any woman of common ſenſe, to be convinced that what diſorders herſelf muſt injure the contents of her womb; and that the injury is the greater in proportion to the delicacy and the ſlow expanſion of thoſe contents. To overſtep the bounds of temperance in the early ſtage of pregnancy, from an idea of the embryo's wanting ſuch ſupplies, would be almoſt as frantic as to drown an infant for the purpoſe of quenching its ſuppoſed thirſt, or to gorge it even to burſting, in order to ſatisfy the cravings of imaginary hunger.

But the abſurd notion of the embryo's wants has been attended with incalculable miſchief of another kind;—it has

has given a ſanction to the moſt whimſical and the moſt pernicious deſires. Green-ſick girls do not indulge in ſuch ſilly and ſuch hurtful fancies as many pregnant women: yet the propenſities of the former are checked by the force of ridicule, of argument, or of authority; while the *longings* of the latter bid defiance to all control; and it is even deemed the height of cruelty not to gratify them in their wildeſt extent. To the candid diſcuſſion of this very intereſting part of my ſubject, I hope I need not requeſt the ſerious attention of of every female reader.

One of the natural conſequences of conception is the ceaſing of the *menſes*, which is accompanied with a redundancy of blood greater or leſs in proportion to the previous fulneſs of the habit. Such a ſwell in the vital ſtream gives riſe to feveriſh appearances; ſuch as heat in the palms of the hands, fluſhings in the face, and a ſlight head-ach.

But

But the ſtomach is moſt affected by the changes which then take place in the womb and the whole habit. It is often diſturbed by the complaints already deſcribed,—nauſea, vomiting, heart-burn, and the like. Theſe, as I ſaid before, are not ſymptoms of indiſpoſition or diſeaſe, the moſt healthy woman being as ſubject to them in the early months of pregnancy as thoſe who are delicate and infirm. It is thus that every mother receives timely notice of her ſituation, with proper warnings not to overcharge her ſtomach, when its powers of digeſtion are ſo weak, and a fulneſs of the habit is ſo manifeſt.

Unhappily all pregnant women are not alike diſpoſed to attend to thoſe kind intimations of nature; and, perhaps, many of them do not know, that the uneaſineſs ariſing from the above cauſes would be removed by perſeverance in a temperate cooling diet. They think they ought to eat more, inſtead of

leſs, in their new ſtate; and torture their invention to find out ſomething to conquer the ſqueamiſhneſs of their appetite. This is a very fruitful ſource of whims and fancies, the indulgence of which is almoſt always injurious. It cannot, indeed, be otherwiſe; as the weakneſs or diminution of any woman's uſual appetite, on ſuch occaſions, is not owing to a mere diſlike of common or ordinary food, but to a real unfitneſs of the ſtomach to receive much of any food. What then are we to expect, when things equally improper, perhaps, both in quantity and quality, are forced upon it, to ſatisfy ſome artificial craving, or ſome imaginary want?

As ſoon as a woman begins to conſult her caprice, inſtead of attending to nature, ſhe is ſure to be encouraged in abſurdity by old nurſes, or female goſſips, who take a delight in amuſing her credulity by the relation of many wonderful and alarming injuries, ſaid to

to have been done to children, through the unſatisfied deſires of their mothers. Every fairy tale, however repugnant to common ſenſe, gains implicit belief; for reaſon dares not intrude into the regions of fancy: and were a man bold enough to laugh at ſuch fictions, or to remonſtrate with a pregnant woman on the danger of giving way to any of her extravagant wiſhes, he would certainly be conſidered as a conceited fool, or an unfeeling monſter. Argument is loſt, and ridicule has no force, where people pretend to produce a hoſt of facts in ſupport of their opinion. Every woman, who brings into the world a marked child, can immediately aſſign the cauſe: yet no mother was ever able, before the birth, to ſay with what her child would be marked; and I believe it would be equally difficult afterwards, without the aid of fancy, to diſcover in a fleſh-mark any reſemblance to the object whence the impreſſion had been ſuppoſed to originate.

On

On examining various inſtances of fleſh-marks, and other dreadful events, ſaid to be cauſed by diſappointed *longings*, it has appeared that moſt of them were the effects of obſtructions, of preſſure, or ſome external injury; and that none could be fairly traced to the influence of imagination. Similar accidents are obſervable in the brute ſpecies; and even in plants, unconſcious of their propagation or exiſtence. It is alſo well known, that ſeveral children are born with marks on the ſkin, though their mothers never experienced any *longings*; and that, in other caſes, where women had been refuſed the indulgence of their *longings*, no effect was perceptible in the child, though the mother's imagination had continued to dwell on the ſubject for a conſiderable time.

The doctrine of imagination, like every thing founded in abſurdity, confutes itſelf by being carried too far.

The

The ſame power of marking or diſfiguring the child is aſcribed to the ſudden terrors and the ungratified cravings of pregnant woman. The abettors of this doctrine are not even content with a few ſpecks or blemiſhes on the ſkin, but maintain that the mother's imagination may take off a leg or an arm, or even fracture every bone in the child's body. I have ſeen a child born without a head; but it was not alledged that the mother had been preſent at the beheading of any perſon, or had ever been frightened by the ſpectacle of a human body deprived of its head. If ſhocking ſights of this kind could have produced ſuch effects, how many headleſs babes had been born in France during ROBESPIERRE's reign of terror!

In order to ſhew that the fancy, however agitated or ſtrongly impreſſed with the dread of any particular object, cannot ſtamp its reſemblance, or even the ſmalleſt

ſmalleſt feature of it on the child in the womb, Doctor MOORE relates the following ſtory of a remarkable occurrence within the ſphere of his own knowledge:—

"A lady, who had great averſion to monkies, happened unfortunately, during the courſe of her pregnancy, to viſit in a family where one of thoſe animals was the chief favourite. On being ſhewed into a room, ſhe ſeated herſelf on a chair, which ſtood before a table upon which this favourite was already placed: he, not naturally of a reſerved diſpoſition, and rendered more petulent and wanton by long indulgence, ſuddenly jumped on the lady's ſhoulders. She ſcreamed, and was terrified; but on perceiving who had treated her with ſuch indecent familiarity, ſhe actually fainted; and through the remaining courſe of her pregnancy, ſhe had the moſt painful conviction that her child

would be deformed by ſome ſhocking feature, or perhaps the whole countenance of this odious monkey.

"The pangs of labour did not overcome this impreſſion, for in the midſt of her pains ſhe often lamented the fate of her unfortunate child, who was doomed through life to carry about a human ſoul in the body of an ape. When the child was born, ſhe called to the midwife with a lamentable voice for a ſight of her unfortunate offspring, and was equally pleaſed and ſurpriſed when ſhe received a fine boy into her arms. After having enjoyed for a few minutes all the rapture of this change to eaſe and happineſs from pain and miſery, her pains returned, and the midwife informed her that there was ſtill another child. 'Another!' exclaimed ſhe, 'then it is 'as I have dreaded, and this *muſt* be 'the monkey after all.' She was, however, once more happily undeceived; the ſecond was as fine a boy as the firſt.

I knew them both:—they grew to be ſtout comely youths, without a trace of the monkey in either their faces or diſpoſitions."

Having before enlarged on the dangerous effects of the paſſions, and of fear in particular, during pregnancy, it cannot be ſuppoſed that I look upon frightful objects, ſcenes of horror, or any other cauſes of a ſudden ſhock, as matters of indifference. On the contrary, I would have them very carefully avoided as they have often cauſed abortion, or otherwiſe injured the health both of the mother and child*, though they cannot diſcolour the ſkin, derange the limbs, or alter the ſhape of the latter.

* I knew an inſtance of a mother, who not only loſt the *fœtus* through a fright, but was otherwiſe ſo much affected as never after to enjoy an hour's health. I cannot therefore too ſtrongly cenſure the frantic impulſe which ſo often urges pregnant women, and nurſes with infants at the breaſt, to ruſh among crowds at a dreadful fire, an execution, or any other ſhocking ſpectacle.

It

It is from this ſilly apprehenſion, in conſequence of any fright, that I wiſh to relieve the minds of credulous and timid poor women, who may do themſelves a real injury by the dread of an imaginary evil.

It was preciſely with the ſame view that I endeavoured to expoſe the abſurdity of believing that fleſh-marks on a child were the conſequences of his mother's *fancies* or unſatisfied *longings*. This ſilly doctrine has been the cauſe of great uneaſineſs in many families, and has done much miſchief to ſeveral pregnant women, ſometimes by giving a ſanction to the indulgence of their moſt improper whims, and at other times by making them pine for extravagant and unattainable gratifications.

It is another great miſtake to ſuppoſe, that the prevalence of ſuch a belief can anſwer any one good purpoſe. Surely the fictions of ignorance,

ſuperſtition, or impoſture, are not neceſſary to ſecure to women in a ſtate of pregnancy thoſe kind compliances, and that tenderneſs of treatment, which their ſituation requires. The fond huſband will embrace with eagerneſs every opportunity of ſupplying the real wants of the wife now doubly dear to him, and even of anticipating her ſilent wiſh for any rational enjoyment. But ſhe ſhould alſo know, that the tyranny of caprice will prove no leſs injurious to herſelf than diſagreeable to others.

Let not pregnant ladies imagine that I am for confining the ſphere of indulgence within very narrow limits. I ſhould be more inclined to enlarge than to contract its boundaries, as far as nature and reaſon would allow. I would not even be particularly ſtrict, except in caſes of evident danger. While I diſcouraged capricious deſires, or improper whims and fancies, I would diſtinguiſh them from *real* and *involuntary longings*, which

which are ſometimes occaſioned by that weakneſs and diſorder of the ſtomach ſo uſual, as I before obſerved, for three or four months after conception. There can be no doubt as to the cauſe of ſuch longings; for a ſimilar effect is known to take place at other times, and not only in women, but in men, when their ſtomachs are weakened or diſordered by intemperance, illneſs, or any accident. I have often met with caſes of this kind in fevers, epilepſies, and other nervous diſeaſes; and where the craving often recurred, or ſteadily continued, I have always directed that it ſhould be indulged, though the object of deſire might not appear conſiſtent with the regimen commonly preſcribed in thoſe complaints. When the longings are involuntary, and the feelings acute, a patient may ſuffer much from diſappointment or delay; and caſes frequently occur of perſons who recovered from the moſt hopeleſs ſtate, after having diſobeyed the doctor's commands, and been

freely indulged in what they had ſo ardently deſired. I do not ſay that the cure was abſolutely effected by the uſe of the forbidden food or drink; but I am convinced, from repeated obſervations, that the ſtrong and ſudden appetite for ſuch food or drink, however ſtrange it might ſeem, was a ſymptom of a favourable change in the complaint, and a ſure indication of returning health.

On the ſame principle, therefore, that rigid prohibitions or denials might be attended with much pain in a ſtate of pregnancy, a ſtate of exquiſite ſenſibility, I ſtrongly recommend a ſpeedy compliance not only with what may be deemed the natural and reaſonable deſires of the mother, but even with *all her involuntary longings*, which do not evidently ariſe from caprice, and are not directed to things of a noxious quality. I would pay little regard, for inſtance, to the whim of ſuch a lady as

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is repreſented by SMOLLET longing for a hair from her huſband's beard, and, what was worſe, wanting to have the pleaſure of plucking it out herſelf; or to the more diſguſting wiſh of another lady, deſcribed by ADDISON, who longed to partake with a flock of carrion-crows, which ſhe ſaw feaſting on the fleſh of a dead horſe.

It would be alſo carrying my plan of compliance too far to let a pregnant woman live chiefly on unripe fruits, raw onions, or any other acid and acrimonious ſubſtances; which could not fail to injure her own health and that of her child. An opinion prevails that a woman in ſuch a ſtate can digeſt every thing ſhe likes or longs for; but, ſuppoſing this to be true, it does not follow that living on traſh, or on improper articles of food or drink, will not be detrimental to the *fœtus* in her womb. Slight or momentary deviations from the rules of wholeſome diet or ſtrict

temperance may be occaſionally allowed, but perverſe habits are never to be indulged.

I hope, therefore, it will not be deemed *needleſsly ſevere* to recommend, in the early period of pregnancy, a becoming check on abſurd or pernicious deſires, and a moderate uſe of ſuch things as have been always found to agree with the ſtomach and conſtitution. I do not inſiſt upon a total change from former modes of living; but, unleſs the appetite be very much vitiated, it will direct women at that time to what is moſt proper and ſalutary. They have generally a diſlike to animal food; and, if induced to eat it freely, from a miſtaken notion of their being then in greater need of ſuch aliment, they are ſure to ſuffer ſome inconvenience. On the contrary, their natural reliſh for ripe fruits and boiled vegetables may be ſafely gratified. Milk, jellies, veal-broths, and the like liquids, which afford

afford eaſy nouriſhment, being converted into chyle without any great effort of the ſtomach, are alſo very allowable. Should a particular deſire for ſolid animal ſubſtances be felt at dinner, freſh meat of the young and tender kind, veal, lamb, capons, pigeons, pheaſants, and partridges, may now and then afford an innocent and grateful variety. But I muſt again beg, that temperance may always preſide at the table; and that the refinements of cookery may never be exerted to raiſe a falſe appetite by artificial provocatives.

While I am thus tracing the boundaries of rational indulgence, which ſhould not be over-ſtepped by thoſe who have it in their power to command every gratification, I ſee alſo the neceſſity of ſome admonitions to women whoſe narrow circumſtances may appear to require no additional reſtraint. It has been very truly obſerved, that, in the loweſt claſſes of ſociety, eſpecially in great

great cities, we often meet with a ſort of luxury more baneful than any which prevails in high life,—a luxury that conſiſts in the immoderate uſe of ſtrong liquors; to which the miſcarriages, the fevers, and the death of ſo many poor married women in London and other populous towns muſt be aſcribed. There is nothing, in fact, ſo pernicious to the mother, and to the *fœtus* in her womb, as drinking ardent ſpirits, eſpecially when carried to exceſs. It is adminiſtering poiſon to the embryo, and is certainly a ſpecies of murder.

The taſte of ſuch perſons is not more depraved with regard to their drink than their food. The latter perverſeneſs is indeed very frequently the conſequence of the former. Spirituous liquors deſtroy the natural appetite, and leave no reliſh but for bacon, or other ſalted and ſmoke-dried meats, ſalt fiſh, or red herrings, than which nothing can be much more ſtimulating, inflammatory, and

and indigeſtible. But ſuppoſe that their fondneſs for this worſt of aliment is not always the effect of ſwallowing *liquid fire*, but of habit; and that the ſtomach, ſtrengthened by the hardy employments of ſome of thoſe poor women, may be able to digeſt any thing; why ſhould its powers be exerted in ſuch unproductive efforts? A greater quantity of food is certainly requiſite, in proportion to the greater quantity of labour; but let that food be of the moſt wholeſome kind. Plenty of vegetables, with the addition of a little freſh meat, will ſatisfy every natural craving, and will afford both the mother and child the pureſt ſupplies of health and vigour.

After the fourth month of pregnancy, the growth of the *fœtus* becomes very rapid, and the demands for nourifhment, made by a thriving child on the conſtitution of its mother, are proportionally ſtrong and inceſſant. Nature now, with wonderful care, invigorates

the organs of digeſtion to anſwer thoſe increaſing demands. The ſtomach is no longer ſo apt to be diſordered as before; its functions are performed with eaſe and effect; and a more liberal mode of living is not only allowable, but neceſſary. All the reſtraint which ſhould be impoſed is a little attention to the quality of the food. Provided it be cooling and nutritious, it may be uſed freely, and as often as the appetite requires. I need not repeat what I have already ſaid in favour of ripe fruits, boiled vegetables, milk, jellies, veal-broth, and animal ſubſtances of the young and tender kind. The bill of fare may be enlarged rather than contracted at this time; and variety may be allowed to preſent her ſweeteſt ſtores to the taſte and fancy, but without the aid of any pernicious ſeaſoning.

I have juſt hinted at the propriety of indulging the appetite *as often* as the deſire of food is ſtrongly felt. It is even

adviſeable to prevent importunate cravings. Emptineſs is more to be dreaded in the advanced ſtages of pregnancy than a little exceſs. Inſtead, therefore, of continuing my former prohibition againſt ſuppers, I would now recommend agreeable repaſts, conſiſting of biſcuits, fruit, oyſters, eggs not boiled hard, or any other light food and eaſy of digeſtion. But meat ſuppers muſt never follow a late or hearty dinner: an unſeaſonable load would oppreſs the ſtomach: moderate ſupplies, on the contrary, are neceſſary to ſatisfy the child's ſtrenuous demands for ſuſtenance, which do not ceaſe even by night. Theſe, if neglected, will cauſe uneaſy ſenſations in bed, and often prevent ſleep. It is juſtly remarked by Dr. Denman, when ſpeaking of this reſtleſſneſs, which is generally troubleſome towards the concluſion of pregnancy, that thoſe women who ſuffer moſt from it, though reduced in appearance, bring forth luſty children, and have eaſy labours.

hours. But, if the mother has little uneaſineſs, and grows corpulent during pregnancy, the child is generally ſmall; and if the child ſhould die before the time of parturition, the inquietude entirely ceaſes. In the firſt caſe, as this judicious writer obſerves, the abſorbing powers of the child ſeem too ſtrong for the parent; but, in the latter, the retaining powers of the parent are ſtronger than the abſorbing ones of the child: ſo that, on the whole, it appears natural that women ſhould become thinner when they are pregnant.

One direction more is neceſſary with regard to ſuppers. They ſhould never be later than nine o'clock, after which an hour may be ſpent in cheerful converſation, as the beſt means of preparing for the enjoyment of ſound repoſe. I hope that the cuſtom of going to bed early, and of riſing early, which is one of the beſt preſervatives of health at all times, will be particularly adhered to during

during pregnancy. Women in this condition ſhould not, upon any account, be tempted to ſit up after ten, and they will find no difficulty in riſing at ſix, though, towards the concluſion of their term, they may ſafely remain an hour longer in bed every morning.

In my former hints to women before marriage, I pointed out the peculiar importance of open air and frequent exerciſe to females, who, in general, ſpend too much of their time in domeſtic and ſedentary employments. I recommended a variety of active diverſions both without doors and within, according to the ſtate of the weather. I would have young ladies dance and jump about as much as they pleaſe, and as nature wiſely prompts. But, when they become wives and mothers, their deportment muſt be different, or they will riſk the loſs of the embryo in their womb,—a loſs always attended with irreparable injury to their own health.

Miſ-

Miſcarriages are often occaſioned by great bodily exertions, though in the form of amuſement, as well as by the ſtraining efforts of hard labour. It was not without the juſteſt reaſon that HIPPOCRATES forbade dancing and all violent exerciſe during pregnancy: he himſelf had been witneſs to a fœtus being dropt on the ſtage by a performer in the dancing line. Let not pregnant women then attempt to vie with other females in the lively dance: the former ſhould even avoid all crowded aſſemblies, whether gay or ſerious; for, beſides the impurity of the air in ſuch places, of the bad effects of which they are very ſuſceptible, they are expoſed to great danger from any accidental preſſure. I have known a lady to ſuffer abortion in conſequence of the ſqueeze of an elbow at entering a church door. How much more likely is this to happen at balls, at play-houſes, and other places of amuſement, which are commonly more frequented than places of worſhip!

When

When I ſay that violent exertions and hard labour are apt to occaſion miſcarriages, I do not mean to recommend indolence and inactivity to pregnant women. This would be running into the oppoſite extreme, which is ſtill more dangerous than the other. Indolence in pregnancy is not only one of the great cauſes of abortion, but of the puerperal, or childbed fever, ſo fatal to delicate mothers. A woman who lives fully, and neglects exerciſe, cannot fail to bring on a plethora, or a fulneſs of the habit and redundancy of humours, which muſt be productive of very bad effects. The whole frame becomes languid: all the vital organs ſeem to loſe their energy: the powers of the womb in particular are enfeebled or perverted; and though a miſcarriage ſhould not take place, the labours are ſure to be long, ſevere, and dangerous; and the offspring puny and deformed. In order, therefore, to ſecure the bleſſings of a happy delivery and a healthy

child, a pregnant woman ought to take every day a moderate degree of exercife, ſuch as ſhe has been moſt accuſtomed to, only uſing leſs exertion, and guarding againſt fatigue.

Some writers on midwifery have aſſerted, that, in the early months of pregnancy, the exerciſe ſhould be very moderate, but might be ſafely increaſed in the latter months. The abſurdity of ſuch a notion has been very ably expoſed by the faireſt reaſoning, and the incontrovertible evidence of facts.

The example of the brute ſpecies has firſt been referred to, as, in every thing that reſpects the preſervation of life, their inſtinct is more unerring than the fanciful ſpeculations of man. It is obſervable of the quadrupeds in our fields and parks, that the moſt friſky of them, when pregnant, aſſume a grave and ſteady deportment: their natural fond-

neſs

neſs for going together in herds and flocks is ſuſpended; and, if left to their own inclinations, they gradually leſſen their uſual exerciſe as they advance in pregnancy.

The ſame thing is well known to be equally true of wild animals. In a ſtate of pregnancy, they take no more exerciſe than is neceſſary to procure their food. If forced to greater exertions in ſelf-defence, or when hard purſued, they often drop their young; and though beaſts of prey have no claim to pity, yet ſurely the harmleſs and timid hare ought not in that ſtate to be worried, merely to gratify a cruel or inconſiderate ſportſman's fondneſs for the chaſe. It is ſtill more inexcuſable to over-load, or to ſtrain by ill-timed labour, a mare in foal, which has frequently cauſed a premature expulſion of her young.

From theſe remarks on the inſtinctive conduct of brutes, a very wiſe leſſon has

been drawn for the guidance of pregnant women. They are not, for ſome time after conception, more ſenſible of fatigue than at any other period, nor have they any certain proofs of their own condition. What then, it has been reaſonably aſked, ſhould direct them to make any change in their cuſtomary exerciſes? Theſe may be continued, but never to a violent or immoderate degree, for at leaſt four months, not only with ſafety, but with the utmoſt benefit. When the contents of the womb begin to increaſe very perceptibly, the ſame degree of exerciſe, which pregnant women before enjoyed with pleaſure, will now make them faint and weary;—a ſtrong hint to diminiſh it. Their own feelings will direct them better than the caprice of others; and no ſubtlety of argument ſhould induce them to believe, that nature in this caſe alone deviates from her uniform courſe of action, and requires them to exert themſelves more in proportion as they are

leſs

leſs capable of it; or, in plainer words, to run the faſter the greater weight they carry. Slow, ſhort walks in the country, or gentle motion in an open carriage, muſt be far better ſuited to the advanced period of pregnancy, by uniting the advantages of freſh air with thoſe of agreeable and ſalutary exerciſe.

In order to leave no doubt upon this ſubject, an appeal has been made to facts, and particularly to the experience of women who follow very hard occupations in the country. They feel no inconvenience from their uſual employments in the early months of pregnancy, and require no indulgence, but a little abatement of their toil when they become unwieldy. They know nothing of artificial precepts, which would teach them to invert the order of nature. Temperance and moderate exerciſe, proper periods of labour and of reſt, the country air, and the cheering influence of a contented mind, inſure to

them the continuance of health in every ſtage, an exemption from the common diſeaſes of pregnancy, an eaſy lying-in, and a ſpeedy recovery from childbed. The vigour alſo of their offspring is juſtly proverbial.

It would be painful to contraſt with this picture the enervating effects of indolence and luxury in high life, or the truly pitiable condition of poor married women in manufacturing towns, and in great cities. The confined impure air which they breathe in theſe places, relaxes the frame and deſtroys its activity. What they eat, what they drink, is often improper, ſometimes pernicious. Their meals and their hours of reſt are equally irregular. The victims of poverty are ſeldom able to procure the means of ſcanty ſubſiſtence, without the ſacrifice of neceſſary ſleep. Their condition is really more diſtreſſing than that of female ſlaves in the Weſt Indies. Theſe experience a little mercy when preg-

nant, their owners being actuated by the double impulſes of ſelf-intereſt, and of humanity towards breeding women: but, in London, the wretched hireling experiences no lenity on account of her pregnancy; ſhe is even obliged to conceal her ſituation as much as ſhe can, in order to get employment; and has often no alternative, but to periſh with famine, or to run the riſk of miſcarrying by continued exertions at the waſhing-tub, or at ſome other toilſome work, for ſixteen or eighteen hours, according to the caprice or the ſordid views of her unfeeling employer. To impoſe ſuch taſks on the hungry and the diſtreſſed,—to cauſe abortion by oppreſſive labour,—under whatever pretence the inhuman miſtreſs may ſtrive to juſtify her own conduct,—is certainly MURDER!

Though my former remarks on dreſs may be eaſily applied to a ſtate of pregnancy, yet this is a matter of ſo much concern to mothers and to their chil-

dren, that I hope my female readers will pardon me for troubling them with ſome farther obſervations on the ſubject. Before marriage, errors in dreſs can only injure their own health, or disfigure their perſons; but, after conception, the form, the health, and the very exiſtence of the child, will greatly depend upon the mother's dreſs. Indeed, were I to aſſign a cauſe not only for the diminutiveneſs, debility, and diſtortion of infants, but for thoſe *fleſh-marks* which are ſuperſtitiouſly aſcribed to *diſappointed longings*, I ſhould be much more inclined to impute theſe evils to preſſure upon the womb, than to the alleged influence of the mother's fancy. The gradual aſcent of the womb, after the fourth month, is wiſely deſigned by nature, to acquire more ſpace for eaſy growth and expanſion. But her benignant purpoſes are defeated, if the body be girded by tight bandages, or ſqueezed within the narrow circle of a whalebone preſs.

I need

I need not ſtop to explain a thing in itſelf ſo obvious, as the operation of ſuch fatal checks on the increaſing ſize of the *fœtus;* but how they ſhould be productive of fleſh-marks and deformity may require ſome little illuſtration. It is well known that young trees and plants, and, in a word, vegetables of every kind, when confined in their growth, get diſtorted, or take on a bad ſhape; and that the tender bark as well as the fruit will be marked, if they ſuffer the leaſt compreſſion or reſtraint. Why ſhould not compreſſion have ſimilar effects on the *fœtus* in the womb, where it is almoſt in the ſtate of a jelly? The great wonder is, that it ſhould ever eſcape bearing the marks of a tight-laced mother's indiſcretion.

The doctrine here laid down does not reſt ſolely even upon the faireſt reaſoning by analogy, but is ſupported by facts. Nations that go almoſt naked are ſtrangers to fleſh-marks and deformities,

formities, except what may ariſe from accidental injury, or external violence. But in proportion as men remove from a ſtate of nature, and falſe refinement introduces, as perſonal ornaments, tight and oppreſſive incumbrances of dreſs, we ſee a pigmy or deformed race crawl about, to publiſh their mothers' folly, and to reproach them with having thwarted or cramped nature in her operations.

In my "Domeſtic Medicine," as well as in a former part of the preſent work, I felt great pleaſure in paying a juſt compliment to the taſte and good ſenſe of the ladies, ſo admirably diſplayed in the preſent faſhions of dreſs. The high-heeled ſhoes, in which they uſed to totter about as upon ſtilts, and the tight-laced ſtays, which gave them the appearance of inſects cut almoſt aſunder in the middle, are happily exploded: the poet's fiction is realized,—the philoſopher's wiſh is gratified, in ſeeing

ing Beauty arrayed by the Graces; and health, eaſe, and elegance, alike conſulted in the dreſſes of our fair countrywomen.

But as faſhion is very changeable;—as there is nothing, however ridiculous or hurtful, to which it cannot give a ſanction;—and as the return to old abſurdities and old prejudices may be dreaded, unleſs the propriety and importance of the preſent reform are ſtrongly impreſſed upon the mind, I ſhall endeavour to heighten theſe by a view of the dreadful evils which aroſe from the former ſyſtem of tight bandages, and of ſtiff and cumbrous clothing.

It is not many years ſince the ſugar-loaf ſhape was univerſally admired, and the ſmall waiſt, though contrary to nature, was looked upon as the diſtinguiſhing mark of elegance. Huſbands uſed often to make it their boaſt, that, when they

they married their wives, they could ſpan them round the middle. It was then thought that nothing could produce a fine ſhape but tight lacing, though it never failed to have the contrary effect. Not only deformity without meaſure, but death itſelf was often the conſequence. Ladies were known to drop down lifeleſs in the dance, when no other cauſe could be aſſigned but the tightneſs of the dreſs. Miſcarriages were frequently occaſioned by the ſame cauſe; and various other injuries to the *fœtus* muſt have far exceeded all power of calculation.

Yet, during the prevalence of ſo ſtrange an infatuation, while deformity was deemed beauty, all remonſtrances on the ſubject would have proved unavailing. It would have then been uſeleſs to employ ſuch arguments as now carry conviction to the unprejudiced mind. We may at preſent obſerve, with the hope of being liſtened to, that nature,

ture, when left to herſelf, gives every animal, except thoſe that are formed for ſwiftneſs, a prominency about the middle. If this is not only compreſſed, but the belly ſqueezed cloſe to the backbone, obſtructions of the viſcera muſt enſue; and no great knowledge of the human frame is neceſſary to ſatisfy any perſon, that ſuch obſtructions muſt prove fatal to health. When the veſſels, that take up and convey the nouriſhment to the body, have their functions by any means impeded, the whole ſyſtem muſt ſuffer, and at length periſh by a gradual decay. But nothing can ſo effectually impede the functions of thoſe ſoft parts as preſſure. The ſtomach becomes incapable of performing the grand office of digeſtion; the midriff is forced upwards: the cavity of the cheſt is thereby leſſened, and ſufficient room is not left for the proper play of the lungs. A difficulty of breathing, coughs, and pulmonary conſumptions, are the natural conſequences.

All

All thoſe dangers, occaſioned by tightneſs round the waiſt, are obviouſly increaſed during pregnancy, when the heart, the lungs, the ſtomach, and all the adjoining parts are in a ſtate of tender ſympathy with the womb; and when the growth of the *fœtus* neceſſarily requires more room, as before obſerved, for eaſy expanſion. To confine it at that period muſt inevitably produce weakneſs, deformity, or abortion. "Remember," ſays the ingenious author of PÆDOTROPHIA,

———Remember, not to gird too tight
Your ſwelling waiſt, tho' pleaſing to the ſight;
Nor, for a ſhape, within the ſtraiten'd womb,
Like Gallic mothers, the poor child entomb.—

But young Engliſh wives have often been guilty of the ſame fatal imprudence, not, indeed, ſo much for the ſake of "a ſhape," as from impulſes of falſe modeſty, and for fear of appearing either indecent, or too proud of the happy proofs of their fecundity.

I hope

I hope, however, that the days of folly and of abſurdity in thoſe reſpects are paſt; and that the evils, which were then ſo frequent, will operate as a warning againſt any poſſible reſtoration of that moſt awkward and moſt pernicious contrivance called *ſtays*. Let me alſo very earneſtly forbid the uſe of tight necklaces, tight garters, or any ligatures which may reſtrain the eaſy motions of the limbs, or obſtruct the free circulation of the blood and juices. I ſhould farther obſerve, that it is not enough to have diſcontinued the high-heeled ſhoe, unleſs the ſhape of the foot and toes is a little attended to. Trifling as this circumſtance may appear, the neglect of it has often been attended not only with pain, with cramps, and with corns, but with many ſtill more diſtreſſing conſequences. Of theſe I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more fully in my obſervations on the dreſs of children.

To

To ſum up in a few words the chief part of my advice on this ſubject to pregnant women, and to the fair ſex in general, I need uſe but a ſingle aſſertion, that a flowing dreſs, ſuſtained by the ſhoulders, and gently compreſſed by a zone round the middle, with only as much tightneſs as is neceſſary to keep the clothes in contact with the body, ever was, and ever will be, the moſt healthy, comfortable, and truly elegant habit that females can wear, or fancy invent.

The hints concerning cleanlineſs, which are given in the laſt chapter, will be found no leſs uſeful after marriage than before, with this ſingle exception, that, during pregnancy, lukewarm water is preferable to cold, not only for a total immerſion of the body, but alſo for partially bathing the upper and lower extremities, more eſpecially the latter. I have, indeed, known

many pregnant women, who always uſed cold water on theſe occaſions, and who plunged into the ſea two or three times a week during the ſummer months, without injury. Yet I think their example too bold, and too dangerous, to be recommended to general imitation.

CHAP. III.

A FEW REMARKS ON CHILDBIRTH.

THERE is not any part of medical ſcience which has been cultivated with greater aſſiduity, and finally with greater ſucceſs, than midwifery. The errors of ignorance, the raſhneſs of preſumption, the amuſing theories of ingenious fancy, have at length given way to the unerring dictates of reaſon and experience. By theſe it has been clearly proved, that, in every healthy and well-formed ſubject, the powers of nature alone are fully adequate to the accompliſhment of her greateſt work, the preſervation of the human ſpecies; and that the buſy interference of man is more likely to diſturb and impede, than to aſſiſt her efforts. Whatever differences of opinion may prevail on other

other points merely ſpeculative, all well-informed practitioners are now agreed in this, that the regular proceſs of a labour muſt never be hurried on by artificial means, nor interrupted by the meddling hand of indiſcretion or officiouſneſs.

It is painful to reflect on the numbers that muſt have periſhed, while a contrary method was purſued. People had taken it into their heads, that a woman in labour could not uſe too much exertion on her own part, nor be too much aided by others, to quicken delivery. In the poem before referred to, this notion is inculcated in the form of a medical precept. The poor woman is there deſired,

"To graſp ſome ſtrong ſupport with all her pow'r,
"T' increaſe her efforts in that painful hour."

A happy revolution has now, however, taken place in the ſyſtem of midwifery; and the moſt eminent profeſſors have

made it the firſt object of their public duty to reprobate the abominable cuſtom of *giving aſſiſtance*, as it was called, by dilating the internal and external parts artificially; and of exciting patients, not only by the ſtrongeſt perſuaſions, but by the ſtimulus of hot cordials, *to help themſelves*, as they termed it, and to exert all their voluntary force beyond the dictates of nature; "as if," ſays Dr. DENMAN, "a labour was a trick to be learned, and not a regular proceſs of the conſtitution."

Though the writer now quoted, and many others of no leſs celebrity have omitted nothing of importance in their directions both to midwives and lying-in women, yet as their books, from being deemed works of profeſſional ſcience, are ſeldom read by the latter, I ſhall ſelect a few of their moſt uſeful remarks, and exhibit them in the plaineſt form I can, to guard women in labour againſt the fatal conſequences of their own errors,

errors, or of the improper advice which may be given them by others.

On the firſt ſigns of approaching labour, pregnant women are too apt to take alarm, and inſtantly prepare as for a work of the greateſt toil and danger. Their fears are as groundleſs as their preparation is unneceſſary. If they have done nothing to injure their health during the previous ſtate of pregnancy, they may rely with perfect confidence on the admirable reſources of nature. When left to herſelf, her efforts are always adapted to the conſtitution of the patient, and to the ſtate of thoſe delicate and acutely ſenſible parts, which would ſuffer the greateſt injury from ſudden or ill-timed violence. All that is required of women in labour, is a becoming ſubmiſſion to her courſe of operations. The ſteps, by which ſhe advances to her great end, are ſometimes ſlow, but always ſafe; and ſhe is not

to be hurried, or diſturbed, with impunity.

It is true in almoſt every ſituation, but particularly in childbirth, that thoſe who are moſt patient actually ſuffer the leaſt. If they are reſigned to their pains, it is impoſſible for them to do wrong; but if, from too much eagerneſs to ſhorten thoſe pains and to haſten the final effect, a woman ſhould keep in her breath, and ſtrain with all her might to increaſe, as ſhe may imagine, the inſtinctive action of the womb, the conſequences muſt always be injurious, and often fatal.

In the firſt place, ſuch improper efforts of the patient may exhauſt her ſtrength, ſo as to render her incapable of undergoing the neceſſary fatigue which attends the complete expulſion of the child. On the other hand, if the parts are not duly prepared, violence

is more likely to tear than to dilate them; and accidents of this kind have often occaſioned a fever, or have rendered a woman miſerable for the remainder of her life.

The imprudence of taking hot and cordial nouriſhment during labour, is no leſs reprehenſible. In plethoric habits, it muſt have a feveriſh effect: in any conſtitution, it is at that time a dangerous ſtimulant. The nature of the principle, which ſhould actuate the womb, is immediately changed;—the pains are rendered diſorderly and imperfect;—and the foundation of future miſchief and difficulties, in ſome form or other, is invariably laid. A labour may be ſo ſlow, or of ſuch long duration, as to render a little refreſhment from time to time neceſſary; but this ſhould always be of a mild and cooling quality, the very reverſe of inflammatory food or ſpirituous liquors.

I have already intimated, that, in all *ordinary* caſes, the chief duty of a mid-wife is to let nature take her regular courſe without buſy interference;—to reſtrain, rather than encourage the exertions of the patient's ſtrength;—and, when theſe may be involuntarily carried too far from the impulſe of acute pain, to reſiſt them by the application of ſome equivalent force. But I am very ſorry to add, that the contrary method is too often purſued, eſpecially by practitioners in country-places, where the patients are ſo widely ſcattered, that diſpatch is the firſt object of conſideration, and the maxims of improved ſcience as well as the dictates of humanity are diſregarded from ſtronger views of intereſt. The moment an order comes for the man-mid-wife, he packs up his bag of tools, which may be juſtly called the inſtruments of death: he mounts his horſe, and gallops away, reſolved to haſten the proceſs by all practicable means, that he may be the ſooner ready to attend to another call.

call. At whatever ſtage of the labour he arrives, he ſpurs on nature with as much eagerneſs as he had before ſpurred on his horſe, though the cloſely entwined lives of the mother and her offspring may be endangered by his precipitancy. Yet ſuch, perhaps, is the impatience of the poor woman herſelf, and ſuch very often the ignorance of the by-ſtanders, that the quicker he is in getting through his work, if no *obvious* injury be done at the moment, the greater reputation he undeſervedly acquires, and the more he enlarges the ſphere of his murderous practice. Inſtruments are ſometimes neceſſary, but they ſhould be uſed as ſeldom as poſſible.

One method of preventing the evils which muſt always ariſe from the hurry of profeſſional men, would be to pay them more liberally for their patient attendance. They have nothing but the full employment of their time to truſt to for the means of ſupport; and it is juſt that they ſhould have an adequate compen-

penſation for ſo valuable a ſacrifice. But as this cannot be generally expected, I would recommend the cheaper encouragement of female midwives, none of whom, however, ought to be permitted to practiſe, without a regular licence, obtained—not by money—but by proofs of real qualifications. Such perſons could ſpare more time, and would be found much fitter aſſiſtants to lying-in women, than any ſurgeon, whatever may be his ſkill or talents. I do not inſiſt on the point of delicacy, but of abſolute ſafety, being perſuaded that hundreds of lives are deſtroyed for one that is preſerved by the uſe of inſtruments in a labour.

At ſuch times alſo, it is highly improper to admit any perſon but the midwife and a diſcreet nurſe into the apartment. To ſay nothing of the noxiouſneſs of the breath and perſpiration of ſeveral people in a cloſe room, the officious folly, the ſilly tattle, the inconſiderate language, the fluctuating

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hopes and fears of ſo many goſſips, muſt be productive of the very worſt effects. Let me, therefore, conjure pregnant women never to comply with the requeſt, however well-meant, of their female friends, to be ſent for at the moment of labour;—they are ſure to do ſome harm;—it is impoſſible they can do any good. The patient will find quietneſs and compoſure, of far greater ſervice than the noiſy rallying round her of her friends, to awaken and cheriſh the idea of danger.

After delivery, when repoſe is the chief reſtorative of fatigued nature, and when the purity of the air in the patient's chamber is the beſt preſervative from fever, the excluſion of viſitants muſt be ſtill more ſtrongly inſiſted upon. The whiſper of fond congratulation from the man ſhe holds dear, and whom ſhe has made happy, is all that ſhould be allowed even for a moment. With the ſame view of quieting any flutter of the

the ſpirits, and of preventing the uneaſineſs which a mother naturally feels from the cries of her child, the operation of waſhing and dreſſing the infant ſhould for a few days be performed in an adjoining room.

As the pains of labour, however regular in its progreſs and happy in its iſſue, muſt produce ſome irritation of the ſyſtem, and a tendency to fever, external quietneſs, and perfect compoſure of mind as well as of body, are certainly the firſt objects. But our care ſhould be extended to ſome other points alſo. Too much attention cannot be paid to cleanlineſs: all impurities are to be inſtantly removed. It is equally neceſſary to change the linen often, on account of its retaining the perſpirable matter, which would ſoon be thrown back into the habit, and there produce the worſt effects. Whenever the weather permits, the upper ſaſhes of the windows

are to be let down a little, to admit freſh air; yet ſo as not to expoſe the patient to its direct current, for fear of checking the gentle and ſalutary perſpiration, which naturally follows the fatigue of a labour, and is deſigned to abate any inflammatory or febrile ſymptoms. It would be no leſs dangerous to think of increaſing or of forcing this natural diſcharge by large fires, a load of bed-clothes, cloſely drawn curtains, or the ſtill more pernicious heat of caudle impregnated with ſpices, wine, or ſpirits. A fever is almoſt ſure to be the conſequence of ſuch ill-judged expedients, in whatever manner they may act. Sometimes they will put a total ſtop to perſpiration, though they ſet the body on fire, and thus produce the very evil which they were fooliſhly employed to prevent. At other times, they cauſe ſo profuſe and violent a ſweat, as muſt not only exhauſt the ſtrength of the patient, and frequently deſtroy the power of ſuckling her child, but pre-

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pare the way for the ready attacks of a fever upon the leaſt expoſure to cold.

A temperate degree of warmth, therefore, will beſt promote that diſpoſition both to ſleep and to perſpire, which every woman feels after labour. The fires ſhould be ſuited to the ſeaſon, or rather to the ſtate of the weather, and made barely ſufficient to counteract the effects of cold, and of dampneſs or moiſture. The drinks ſhould be mild and diluting; and the bed-clothes ſhould be light and porous, to favour the eſcape of the perſpirable matter, while they afford a comfortable covering. A due regard to this regulation is the more neceſſary, as the patient muſt not be in a hurry to quit her bed, even when ſhe may fancy her ſtrength and ſpirits perfectly recovered. She ſhould be informed, that the womb does not reſume its natural ſtate for two or three weeks; and that her lying in bed

for that time is moſt conducive to ſo deſirable a purpoſe. A ſofa is very convenient to recline upon, while her bed is at any time adjuſting, or to afford ſome relief from a long continuance in the ſame poſition. But I would by no means adviſe ſitting up in a chair, or removal into another room for the reception of company, till the end of the third week, and then only in caſe of the moſt perfect conſcioufneſs of health and vigour.

The oppoſite extreme of too much indulgence is, indeed, more prevalent. It is a lamentable truth, that numbers of women, after having been ſafely brought to bed, are killed by imaginary kindneſs. They are ſmothered, inſtead of being kept moderately warm. The action of heat from without, is increaſed within by inflammatory food and drink. Neither of theſe ſhould be in any caſe allowed. Women of ſtrong and full habits have nothing to fear from emptineſs

neſs or fatigue; but may be ſaid to invite danger and diſeaſe by improper gratifications of the palate. They ſhould confine themſelves for at leaſt three or four days to barley-water, gruel, and beef-tea. Very weak and delicate women may be allowed ſomething more nutritious, ſuch as calves-feet jellies, or veal and chicken broths, which are much better ſuited to the weakneſs of their ſtomachs, and will ſooner afford the wanted nouriſhment than the ſolid animal ſubſtances.

If the rules of temperance before laid down have been followed during pregnancy, the patient will be eaſily reconciled to abſtemious living for a few days. Indeed, the relaxed ſtate of the ſtomach at this time commonly prevents any natural craving for animal food. But, if a woman has been unhappily accuſtomed to luxuries, or if ſoups ſhould diſagree with her, ſhe may be indulged in a little fiſh, a little boiled veal or chicken,

chicken, and bread pudding. Every ſucceeding day will render ſuch indulgence ſafer. Hot ſpices, however, and ardent ſpirits in any form or mixture, are to be abſolutely prohibited during the whole time of lying-in. Wine itſelf is liable to do much miſchief till every ſymptom of fever or inflammation diſappears; and, even then, ſhould be very ſparingly uſed, not more than a glaſs or two being allowable at the principal meal only.

But though quietneſs, repoſe, the admiſſion of freſh air, ſtrict cleanlineſs, and a temperate cooling regimen, muſt contribute very much to prevent fever, and to promote a woman's ſafe and ſpeedy recovery from childbed; yet all theſe prudent meaſures will often fail, without her own faithful diſcharge of one of the moſt ſacred duties of a mother, that of ſuckling her infant. Unleſs the milk, which is ready to guſh from her nipples, finds the proper vent, it will not only

diſtend and inflame the breaſts, but excite a great degree of fever in the whole ſyſtem. Every attempt to diſperſe it by artificial means, being an act of flagrant rebellion againſt nature, is as dangerous to the mother herſelf, to ſay nothing of her child, as an attempt to procure abortion. The evident determination of the blood to the breaſts, for the wiſeſt and moſt benignant purpoſe, can never be repelled with ſafety. It is either depoſited upon ſome other part, there to produce inflammation; or, if purgatives and ſudorifics are uſed to carry it off by different outlets, the violence of their action muſt be attended with dangerous ſhocks, even to the firmeſt habit.

It may be ſaid, that there are inſtances without number, of mothers who enjoy perfect health, though they never ſuckled their children. I poſitively deny the aſſertion; and maintain, on the contrary, that a mother, who is not prevented by any

any particular weakneſs or diſeaſe from diſcharging that duty, cannot neglect it without material injury to her conſtitution. The ſame midwives who would aſſiſt her in procuring a miſcarriage, if ſhe wanted it, may now alſo undertake to diſperſe her milk with the utmoſt eaſe and ſafety. Let her not truſt to the wicked deluſion. The miſchief is not the leſs certain from its being, perhaps, unperceived at the time; and cruelty to one child often deſtroys the power of procreating another.

If we take a view of all animated nature, it is ſhocking to find, that woman ſhould be the only monſter capable of withholding the nutritive fluid from her young. Such a monſter, however, does not exiſt among ſavage nations. They cannot ſeparate the idea of bringing forth a child, from the neceſſity of giving it ſuck. The wives of the American ſavages are ſaid to extend this mark of motherly tenderneſs and ſolicitude even

to infants that die upon the breaſt. After having beſtowed upon them the rites of burial, they come once a day for ſeveral weeks, and preſs from the nipple a few drops of milk upon the grave of the departed ſuckling. I have ſeen a drawing taken from nature by a gentleman at Botany Bay: it repreſented a female of that country, after having opened one of her veins, and made an inciſion in the navel of her ſickly child, endeavouring to transfuſe her blood into its body, and hoping thereby to reſtore its health, and to prolong its exiſtence. Obſervation and experience had taught her, that the umbilical cord, or navel-ſtring, was the medium through which the *fœtus*, while in the womb, received nouriſhment from its mother: ſhe fancied, therefore, that ſhe could transfuſe her blood through the ſame channel, and renovate a life which was dearer to her than her own! Let the mother in civilized ſociety, who, from motives of ſelfiſh eaſe and imaginary

ginary pleaſure, denies her infant the vital ſtream with which ſhe is abundantly ſupplied for its ſuſtenance, think of the poor ſavage, and ſtart with horror at her own unnatural depravity.

It is alſo a great miſtake on the part of ſuch ſelfiſh mothers, to fancy that they can take more pleaſure by abandoning their infants to the care of hirelings. Some of them may be callous to all reproaches of conſcience for the frequent diſeaſes of thoſe children; but leaving moral ſentiment and natural tenderneſs out of the queſtion, pleaſure is inſeparably connected with the enjoyment of health; and I have already ſhewn how much this is endangered by a mother's unwillingneſs to become a nurſe. I need not repeat what I ſaid of the inflammation and ſuppuration of the breaſt; but my hint on barrenneſs, as one of the probable conſequences of an attempt to diſperſe the milk, may be farther enforced by obſerving, that the

womb is the part moſt likely to be affected in ſuch caſes: the repelled humour has often been depoſited on that delicate organ, and has there produced deep-ſeated and frequently incurable ulcers. Many inſtances of this ſort, as well as of other diſorders ariſing from the ſame cauſe, and equally fatal to fecundity, gave riſe to my former aſſertion, however harſh it may ſound in the ear of faſhionable perverſeneſs.

But I can with equal confidence aſſure the fond parent, faithful to her truſt, and eager to cheriſh her infant with the vital fluid which nature has kindly given her for that purpoſe, that nothing elſe can ſo effectually promote her recovery from childbed, the ſpeedy return of good health, and the long continuation of that invaluable bleſſing. Beſides, all nurſes concur in declaring, that the act itſelf is attended with ſweet, thrilling, and delightful ſenſations,

of

of which thoſe only who have felt them can form any idea.

I have already admitted, that a mother may be prevented from giving ſuck, by ſome particular weakneſs or diſorder; and in touching on the ſame ſubject in another work, I obſerved that women of delicate conſtitutions, ſubject to hyſteric fits, or other nervous affections, made very bad nurſes. Leſt that remark might give too great a ſcope to excuſes, on the ground of pretended weakneſs or delicacy, I added, that every mother who *could*, *ought* certainly to perform ſo tender and agreeable an office. I now go farther, and maintain, that every woman who is not able and willing to diſcharge the duties of a mother, has no right to become one. The ſame perſonal defect, or conſtitutional infirmity, which may diſqualify her for nurſing, ought to be conſidered as an equally ſtrong diſqualification for marrying. But if, after marriage, any ſub-

ſequent diſeaſe or accident ſhould render the diſcharge of a mother's firſt duty impracticable or dangerous, ſhe is, in ſuch caſes only, blameleſs for calling in the aid of another to ſuckle her child.

In the next chapter, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of the ſalutary effects of the mother's milk on the new-born infant. The aim of my preſent obſervations is to convince lying-in women, that the free and natural diſcharge of that precious current is eſſential to their own health and ſafety. But as ſome young mothers, however well inclined, may be diſcouraged from perſevering in their attempts to give ſuck, by the difficulty, awkwardneſs, or pain, attending the firſt experiments, I ſhall ſubjoin for their direction in ſuch caſes, a few rules laid down by the moſt approved writers on midwifery.

The firſt advice given by thoſe eminent practitioners is, to put the child to the

the breaſt as ſoon after delivery and due repoſe as the ſtrength of the mother will permit, care having been previouſly taken to waſh the breaſts with a little warm milk and water, in order to remove the bitter, viſcid ſubſtance, which is furniſhed round the nipple to defend the parts from excoriation or ſoreneſs. When the woman has never nurſed before, the nipples at firſt are ſometimes not ſufficiently prominent to afford a proper hold for the child. The ends alſo of the ſmall tubes through which the milk paſſes, are contracted, to prevent its flowing out ſpontaneouſly. From theſe circumſtances, as well as from the inexpertneſs both of the mother and the infant, ſome pain and difficulty may ariſe. But the common practice of having the breaſts drawn by an old child, or ſome grown perſon, is deemed improper, becauſe the degree of violence uſed on theſe occaſions will often irritate and inflame the parts, and frighten the woman againſt the renewal of

of ſuch painful experiments. Much gentler means will produce the deſired effect. The breaſts ſhould be fomented with flannels dipt in warm water; and then a glaſs or ivory cup, mounted on a bag of elaſtic gum, ought to be applied in ſuch a manner to the nipple, that it will draw it out gently and gradually, while, by moderate preſſure on the ſides of the breaſt with the hands, the milk will be puſhed forward. In obſtinate caſes, inſtruments of more attractive power may be uſed, though with caution, for fear of injuring the breaſt.

If the difficulty be not owing to a flatneſs of the nipple (upon the principal cauſe of which I before hazarded a conjecture), but to a little rigidity of the milk-veſſels, nothing more is neceſſary than the warm fomentation above recommended. The ſtiffneſs or contractions of the ends of thoſe fine tubes will gradually yield to the natural efforts

efforts of the infant. They will ſoon become ſtraight, ſo as no longer to impede the egreſs of the milk, which is drawn into them by the ſuction. Impatience, or exceſſive eagerneſs, in theſe caſes, as in all others, defeats its own end. The attempts at firſt ſhould neither be too often repeated, nor too long continued; and when the child is put to the breaſt, the mother ought to be ſupported by pillows in bed, in a reclining poſture, and with due precautions againſt catching cold.

Such are the dictates of enlightened practice, of which I am happy to avail myſelf, as an additional incitement to mothers not to ſhrink from their duty. A little pain is eaſily ſurmounted, and is followed by laſting pleaſure. I muſt not omit another caution given by the ſame writers, in caſe of any particular ſoreneſs of the nipples, always to procure the beſt medical aſſiſtance,

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as the modes of treatment purſued by ignorant perſons are, in theſe inſtances more eſpecially, no leſs injurious than abſurd.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE NURSING AND REARING OF CHILDREN.

EVERY thing is perfect, ſays ROUSSEAU, as it comes out of the hands of God; but every thing degenerates in the hands of man. This is particularly true of the human ſpecies. If the mother, during pregnancy, has not ſuffered any injury from accident, or from her own imprudence; and if, after the acceſſion of labour, neither ſhe nor the midwife has diſturbed or impeded the efforts of nature; the offſpring of ſtrong and healthy parents is ſure at the birth to be well-formed, healthy, and vigorous. Any inſtances to the contrary are ſo rare and extraordinary, as almoſt to leave ſome doubt of the poſſibility of ſuch an event: yet it appears from the beſt calculations, that at leaſt one half

of the children born die before they are twelve years old. Of the ſurviving half at that period, how many periſh before they attain to maturity! How many others are ſtunted in their growth, diſtorted in their figure, or too much enfeebled ever to enjoy the real ſweets of life! What a train of ills ſeems to await the precious charge, the moment it is taken out of the hands of nature! But as moſt of theſe calamities are the conſequences of miſmanagement or neglect, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew how they may be prevented by tender and rational attention.

SECTION I.

Of the influence of Air on the Health and Lives of Children.

The firſt want of a new-born infant is clearly manifeſted by its cries, not ariſing from any ſenſe of pain, but from a ſtimulus or impulſe to expand the

lungs, and thereby open a free paſſage for the circulation of the blood, and for admiſſion of air, ſo eſſential to the exiſtence of every living creature. While the child lay in the womb, its lungs were in a collapſed or ſhrivelled ſtate: it received all its ſupplies through the medium of the navel-ſtring. But at its birth a very obvious change takes place. The pulſation or throbbing of this cord firſt ceaſes at the remoteſt part, and then, by ſlow degrees, nearer and nearer to the child, till the whole ſtring becomes quite flaccid, all circulation being confined to the body of the infant. It is then that the cries of a healthy child are heard; in conſequence of which the air ruſhes into the lungs; their tubes and cellular ſpaces are dilated; the boſom heaves; the cavity of the cheſt is enlarged; and the blood flows with the utmoſt eaſe. But as the air paſſes out, the lungs again collapſe, and the courſe of the blood receives a momentary check, till a freſh influx or inſpiration

tion of air, in concurrence with the action of the heart and arteries, renews the former ſalutary proceſs, which never ceaſes during life.

The air, thus inhaled, after imparting its vital properties to the whole frame, takes up the perſpirable matter conſtantly iſſuing from the interior ſurface of the lungs, and carries off, on its expulſion, a conſiderable part of the noxious and ſuperfluous humours of the body. Its purity is of courſe deſtroyed, and, in conſequence of being frequently breathed, it becomes unfit for the purpoſe of reſpiration. In a confined place, therefore, it is not air we inhale, but our own effluvia; and every other cauſe, which tends to waſte or pollute the air, renders it in the ſame degree injurious to the ſtrength and health of thoſe who breathe it.

In this account of one of the moſt important of the vital functions, I have avoided

avoided the minute details of anatomical ſcience, which would, indeed, have made it more accurate, but leſs intelligible to the generality of my female readers. I thought it far better to explain to them, in as familiar language as I could, the cauſe of an infant's cry at the moment of its birth, with the hope of rendering them attentive to the purity of what nature ſo ſtrenuouſly demands. The quality of the air we breathe, is of much greater conſequence than our food or drink, at every period of life, but particularly in infancy, a ſtate of the utmoſt delicacy and weakneſs. Good air braces, bad air relaxes, the tender frame: the former is a ſource of health and vigour, the latter of infirmity and diſeaſe.

It ſhould therefore be the firſt object of a pregnant woman's care, to ſecure, at leaſt for the time of her lying-in, a wholeſome ſituation. Inſtead of flying from the country to town, as many do,

ſhe ſhould fly from town to the country. If her circumſtances will not admit of this, ſhe muſt fix her abode in as open and airy a ſtreet as ſhe can, and at as great a diſtance as poſſible from noiſe, from tumult, and from thoſe nuiſances which contaminate the atmoſphere of great cities. Let her apartments be lofty and ſpacious, dry rather than warm, and expoſed to the ſun's morning rays. I have already explained the importance of cleanlineſs, and of occaſionally letting down the upper ſaſhes of the bed-room windows in fine weather, to admit freſh air, and to prevent fever. An attention to theſe points is not leſs neceſſary on the new-born infant's account, than on his mother's. Let not the firſt air he breathes be foul from confinement, too much rarefied by heat, or charged with any noxious exhalations. The mild temperature to which he has been uſed in the womb, renders it very proper to preſerve for ſome time the ſame moderate degree of warmth

in his new place of reſidence. But he is not, on that account, to be roaſted before a great fire, or kept panting in ſteam and pollution.

If the room be kept properly ventilated and free from impurity, the infant will ſoon get hardy enough to be taken out into the open air, not only without the leaſt danger, but with the greateſt advantage; provided always that the ſeaſon of the year, and the ſtate of the weather, encourage ſuch early experiments. A month ſpent within doors, is confinement long enough in almoſt every caſe; and the nurſery is then to be frequently exchanged for green fields and ſunny eminences. There your child will drink, as it were, the vital ſtream pure from its ſource; he will draw in at every breath freſh ſupplies of ſtrength and alacrity; while the bracing action of the air on the ſurface of his body, will give the degree of firmneſs unattainable by any other means.

In the courſe of a few months, the ſtate of the weather need not be much regarded; and its unfavourable changes, unleſs the heat or cold be intenſe, muſt not operate as a check on thoſe daily excurſions from the nurſery. Our climate is very fickle; we ſhall ſuffer much from its rapid variations, if we are not freely expoſed to them in early life; do not therefore ſacrifice the future comfort and ſafety of the grown man, to miſtaken tenderneſs for the infant. If your child be accuſtomed from the cradle to go out in all weathers, he will have nothing to fear from the bleak north or the ſultry ſouth, but will bear every change of ſeaſon, of climate, and of atmoſphere, not only without danger, but without pain or inconvenience.

What is here ſaid of the importance of freſh air, and of frequent expoſure to all ſorts of weather, in early life, muſt derive additional weight from a conſideration

ſideration of the bad effects of confinement and of unwholeſome air upon children. This part of the ſubject is pretty fully diſcuſſed in my "Domeſtic Medicine." I there explained the reaſon why ſo few of the infants that are put into hoſpitals or pariſh workhouſes live. Such places are generally crowded with old, ſickly, and infirm people, by which means the air is rendered ſo extremely pernicious, that it becomes a poiſon to young children. I alſo took notice of one of the worſt afflictions of poverty in great towns, where the poorer ſort of inhabitants live in low, dirty, confined houſes, to which the freſh air has hardly any acceſs. Though grown people, who are hardy and robuſt, may live in ſuch ſituations, yet they generally prove fatal to their offspring, few of whom arrive at maturity, and thoſe who do are weak and deformed.

While I was conſidering the hard lot of the poor, moſt of whoſe children

periſh, becauſe the wretched parents are not in a condition to take them often out into the open air, I could not but obſerve that the rich were without any excuſe for neglecting ſo eſſential a part of their duty. It is their buſineſs to ſee that their children be daily carried abroad, and that they be kept in the open air for a ſufficient time. This will always ſucceed better, if the mother goes along with them. Servants are often negligent in theſe matters, and allow a child to ſit or lie on the damp ground, inſtead of leading or carrying it about. The mother ſurely needs air as well as her children; and how can ſhe be better employed than in attending them?

In the ſame chapter, I had farther occaſion to cenſure a very bad, though a very prevailing cuſtom, of making children ſleep in ſmall apartments, or crowding two or three beds into one chamber. Inſtead of this, the nurſery and the ſleeping-rooms ought always to

to be the largeſt and moſt airy apartments in the houſe. When children are ſhut up in ſmall rooms, the air not only becomes unwholeſome, but the heat relaxes their ſolids, renders them delicate, and diſpoſes them to colds, and many other diſorders, particularly of the convulſive kind. All medical men, who have had much practice in the treatment of children, agree in opinion, that convulſion-fits, of which ſo many infants die, are to be chiefly aſcribed to a confined and impure air. I wiſh to impreſs this truth on the minds of mothers and nurſes, to make them ſenſible of the danger of ſmall or cloſe rooms, and of the pernicious folly of covering an infant's face in bed, or the front of its cradle, and thereby making it breathe the ſame air over and over all the time it ſleeps.

It may be of no leſs conſequence to repeat and enforce my cautions to parents againſt ſending their children,

while very young, or indeed at any age, to crowded ſchools, the atmoſphere of which is really a floating maſs of putrid effluvia. The breath and perſpiration of ſo many perſons in a room, even ſuppoſing them all to be in good health, muſt waſte and corrupt the air, deſtroy its vital properties, and of courſe render it wholly unfit for the ſupport of animal life. But ſhould any one child happen to be diſeaſed, all the reſt are very likely to catch the infection. When I ſee a poor baby, before it can well walk, carried in a nurſe's arms to ſchool, I really feel ſtronger emotions of pity, and of alarm for its ſafety, than if I had ſeen it conveyed to a peſt-houſe. In the latter place, children would be kept ſeparate, and proper means would be uſed to prevent the ſpreading of contagion: in the former, all are thrown together, and there remain with relaxed lungs, open pores, and ſteaming bodies, ſo as to render it almoſt impoſſible for any to eſcape.

As

As thouſands of children die every year the victims of diſeaſes caught at ſchools, and as the health and conſtitutions of ſtill greater numbers are irretrievably ruined by the confinement and the bad air of ſuch places, parents muſt not be offended at the ſeeming harſhneſs of my language in reprobating ſo abſurd, ſo cruel, and ſo unnatural a practice. I know that as ſoon as children begin to run about, they require the moſt watchful care to prevent miſchief. Will any mother urge this as a reaſon for being tired of them, and for confining, as it were in ſtocks, that reſtleſs activity which is wiſely deſigned by nature to promote their growth and vigour? Will ſhe, from a wiſh to ſave herſelf ſome trouble, or to gain time for other buſineſs infinitely leſs important, ſend her little babes to ſchool, under the ſilly pretence of keeping them out of harm's way? I hope what I have already ſaid is ſufficient to convince perſons of common underſtanding, that they cannot

not be expoſed to greater harm, than by being fixed to a ſeat in the midſt of noxious ſteam for ſix or ſeven hours a day, which ſhould be ſpent in the open air and cheerful exerciſe.

Should it be alleged, that children are ſent young to ſchool, from a becoming zeal for their early improvement, I need only reply, that learning, however deſirable, is too dearly bought at the expence of the conſtitution. Beſides, learning can never be acquired by ſuch prepoſterous means. Confinement and bad air are not leſs injurious to the mind, than to the body; and nothing ſo effectually prevents the growth of the intellectual faculties, as premature application. Sending a child to ſchool in his nurſe's arms, is the ſure way to make him an idiot, or to give him an unconquerable diſguſt to books: the only book he ſhould then look at, is the great volume of nature. This is legible at every age, and is as gratifying to a child as to a man; it

it abounds with the moſt delightful and moſt uſeful information: it is equally conducive to pleaſure, health, and knowledge.

A thouſand abſurdities in the faſhionable modes of education preſent themſelves now to my view; but I muſt only take notice of errors in the phyſical treatment of children; and ſurely no errors of this ſort can be more reprehenſible, than that which I have been juſt deſcribing. Debility of body and mind is the certain conſequence of ſending very young children to ſchool; and of ſending them, at any age, to crowded or confined ſchools. The terms of inſtruction are in general ſo low, that a maſter or miſtreſs of a ſchool is obliged to take a great number of ſcholars, in order to get a living; and can ſeldom afford to rent a ſpacious room in an open and elevated ſituation. Yet not only this is abſolutely neceſſary for health, but a large play-ground alſo; where even day-ſcholars

lars ſhould be permitted to go out frequently, to taſte the freſhneſs of the vital breeze. The plants of genius and of manhood cannot flouriſh but by frequent expoſure to the enlivening rays of the ſun.

SECTION II.

Of warm and cold bathing.

In obſerving the regular ſucceſſion of an infant's wants, after the ſupply of air procured by it's firſt cries, it's ſeeming uncleanneſs attracts our notice. The ſkin appears covered with a ſlippery glue, which ſoon dries, and forms a ſort of ſcurf. This ſhould be waſhed off very gently with a ſoft ſponge and warm water, having a little ſoap diſſolved in it. Nurſes, in general, are as eager to remove every ſpeck of it, as if it was the moſt offenſive impurity, though it is perfectly harmleſs, and will eaſily come away in three or four waſhings, without the

the danger of hard rubbing, or the aid of improper, and ſometimes very injurious, contrivances. Ointments or greaſy ſubſtances cannot fail to fill up the little orifices of the pores, and to put a ſtop to inſenſible perſpiration. Spirits of any kind are ſtill worſe, on account of their inflammatory effect. Even GALEN's advice to ſprinkle the child's body with ſalt, that the glutinous matter may be more effectually rubbed off, is at beſt unneceſſary. I have no particular objection to the modern improvement on that hint, which conſiſts in diſſolving ſalt in the warm bath, with a view of giving it the agreeable ſtimulus, as well as the cleanſing and bracing properties of ſea-water; but I would not encourage any ſolicitude in this reſpect, as the eaſieſt and ſimpleſt mode of proceeding will fully anſwer the deſired end.

In the hardy ages of antiquity, we are told that the Germans uſed to plunge their new-born infants into the freezing

waters of the Rhine, to inure them betimes to the ſevere cold of their native country. I need not take any pains to point out the danger of following ſuch an example in our times, when mothers and nurſes are too apt to run into the oppoſite extreme of unnerving effeminacy. In this, as in every thing elſe, the golden mean is the line of wiſdom—the line to be purſued by rational affection. It would be extremely hazardous to dip the tender body of a child, reeking from the womb, in cold water, and to keep it there during the neceſſary operation of waſhing; but the uſe of the cold bath may be ſafely brought about by degrees in five or ſix months after the birth, and will then be found not only one of the beſt means of promoting health and ſtrength, but of preventing alſo many of the moſt diſtreſſing complaints to which children are ſubject. The following method I can confidently recommend, having had frequent opportunities of obſerving its ſalutary effects.

The

The temperature of the bath proper for a new-born infant, ſhould approach nearly that of the ſituation which he has juſt quitted. It is proper to acquaint thoſe who may not have an inſtrument to aſcertain the degree of heat, that abſolute preciſion in that reſpect is by no means neceſſary; their feelings will inform them with ſufficient exactneſs when the water is rather warmer than new milk: a little ſolution of ſoap, as I before obſerved, is all that is wanted to increaſe its ſoftneſs and its purifying effect. The operation of waſhing ſhould be performed in a veſſel large enough to allow room for the expanſion of the infant's limbs, and for eaſily diſcovering any defect in its ſtructure, or any accident which may have happened to it during labour: either may be often remedied by timely care, but may become incurable through delay or neglect. The child ſhould not be kept in the bath longer than five or ſix minutes; and the moment it is taken out, it ſhould be wrapped up in a ſoft warm

warm blanket, and there kept for a few minutes in a ſtate of gentle motion.

I would not have any difference made, either in the temperature of the bath, or the time of the infant's continuance in it, for the firſt month. The uncleanneſs of young children renders frequent waſhing neceſſary. It ſhould be the firſt object of attention in the morning, and the laſt at night; but it ſhould not be performed with a full ſtomach, even when the child receives all its ſupplies from the breaſt. This is the only caution which need be added to thoſe already given concerning gentleneſs in the manner of waſhing, ſpace enough in the bathing-veſſel, and ſtrict care to wipe the child dry, and wrap it warm the inſtant it is taken out of the bath, when expoſure to cold would be doubly dangerous, from the natural delicacy of the infant, and from the immediately preceding warmth and the openneſs of the pores.

After

After the firſt month, the warmth of the water may be leſſened, but almoſt imperceptibly, ſo as to guard againſt the riſk of ſudden changes, or too raſh experiments. The mildneſs of the weather, and the evident increaſe of the child's ſtrength, muſt be taken into conſideration; for, though cold water is very ſerviceable in bracing weak and relaxed habits, yet, if tried too ſoon, its ſtimulus on the ſurface may be too ſtrong, and the powers of re-action within too weak, ſo that the worſt conſequences may follow. Theſe will be prevented by a gradual diminution of the temperature of the water, and by cloſe attention to it's effects, when reduced nearer and ſtill nearer to a ſtate of coldneſs. If immerſion in the bath be quickly followed by a glow all over the body, and a perceptible livelineſs in the child, we may be ſure that the water has not been too cold for his conſtitution, and that we have proceeded with due care. But ſhould it produce chilneſs, evident lan-

guor, and depreſſion, we muſt make the water a little warmer next time, and not venture upon the cold bath till we are encouraged by more favourable appearances.

It would tend rather to increaſe than to clear up the doubts of mothers and nurſes, were I to enter into a detail of all the infirmities and diſeaſes, in which the cold bath would be ſerviceable or injurious, not only during infancy, but at a more advanced period of life. There are many nice diſtinctions in a variety of complaints, where the greateſt medical ſkill and experience are neceſſary, to decide on the propriety or impropriety of reſorting to ſo powerful, but at the ſame time ſo hazardous, a remedy. I muſt, however, forbid its uſe in complaints of the bowels; affections of the lungs; eruptions on the infant's ſkin; and in caſes of extreme weakneſs, indicated by the before-mentioned ſymptoms of chilneſs and apparent loſs of ſtrength and

and ſpirits after immerſion. With ſuch reſtraints on indiſcreet raſhneſs, it is hardly poſſible that a woman can do wrong, in purſuing the plan which I have pointed out, for reducing the warmth of the water by very ſlow and almoſt imperceptible degrees, till it can be employed quite cold with ſafety and benefit.

There is no doubt but a great deal of miſchief has reſulted from the too early and injudicious uſe of the cold bath. I perfectly agree with Dr. UNDERWOOD in his equally ſenſible and humane remark, that "to ſee a little infant, three or four days old, the offspring perhaps of a delicate mother, who has not ſtrength even to ſuckle it, waſhed up to the loins and breaſt in cold water, expoſed for ſeveral minutes, perhaps in the midſt of winter (when children are more inclined to diſeaſe than thoſe born in ſummer) itſelf, in one continued ſcream, and the fond

mother covering her ears under the bed-clothes, that ſhe may not be diſtreſſed by its cries, has ever ſtruck me as a piece of unneceſſary ſeverity, and ſavours as little of kindneſs, as plunging an infant a ſecond or third time into a tub of water, with it's mouth open and gaſping for breath, in the old-faſhioned mode of cold bathing: both of which often induce cramps and pains in the bowels, and weakneſs of the lower extremities, but rarely an increaſe of ſtrength."

I hope the advice which I have given reſpecting the proper temperature of the bath during the firſt months of infancy, will operate as a check on the "unneceſſary ſeverity" ſo juſtly cenſured in the firſt part of this obſervation. But the error pointed out in the "old-faſhioned mode of cold bathing" may not be ſo eaſily corrected, unleſs ſome ſtrong and clear reaſons are aſſigned for diſcontinuing the dangerous part of that practice.

Women

Women ſhould therefore be informed, that the immediate effect of immerſion in cold water, at any age, is a ſudden contraction of the pores and blood-veſſels of the ſkin, and a general repulſion or throwing back of the fluids towards the internal parts. The chilling ſenſation excites the moſt vigorous efforts of the organs of life, particularly the heart and arteries, to increaſe the heat within the body, and reſiſt the ſhock given to the ſurface. This is what is called action and re-action, the degree of the latter being always in proportion to the violence of the former, and to the ſtrength of the conſtitution. Hence ariſes that delightful glow, which follows the firſt impreſſion of cold; and, ſo far, the full play of the vital organs is as pleaſant as it is ſalutary. But, as the increaſed heat ſoon paſſes off from the body, if it be continued in the water, or taken out and directly plunged into it again, the animal powers are liable to be exhauſted by inceſſant or repeated

efforts to produce more heat, and to overcome the action of the external cold. Grown perſons have often experienced the fatal conſequences of too long a ſtay in the water. What then muſt the effects of a ſecond and a third dip be, upon the tender and delicate frame of an infant, whoſe vital power is proportionally feeble? Beſides the riſk of extinguiſhing the faint ſparks of life, an accumulation of humours in the head, ſtagnations of the blood in other parts, and convulſion fits, are very likely to take place. But though none of theſe melancholy circumſtances ſhould happen at the moment, a ſtoppage of growth, and a puninefs of habit, muſt certainly follow ſo inconſiderate an abuſe of the very means beſt calculated, under proper management, to promote health, expanſion, and vigour.

In caſes of previous indiſpoſition, or diſeaſe, where the cold bath may be preſcribed as a remedy, the danger to a poor

poor infant muſt be ſtill greater from an injudicious mode of proceeding. I took no ſmall pains, in my "Domeſtic Medicine," to expoſe the whims and prejudices of nurſes in this reſpect. They would be objects of ridicule, were they not often attended with the moſt ſerious conſequences. I ſhould ſmile, for inſtance, at the remains of ſuperſtitious weakneſs, in believing that the whole virtue of the water depends upon its being conſecrated to a particular ſaint, were it not that moſt of thoſe *holy wells*, as they are called, are very unfit for bathing, and, what is worſe, that the child is kept too long in the water, and that due attention is not paid to friction and warmth afterwards. Some of thoſe ſilly women place their confidence in a certain number of dips, as three, ſeven, or nine, though every dip after the firſt, at each time of bathing, not only defeats the hope of benefit, but increaſes the ſtrong probability of much miſchief. This may indeed be avoided, by dipping the in-

fant only once at a time; but, even in that caſe, the magical number of dips is very inſufficient for any deſirable purpoſe. I have alſo known nurſes who would not dry a child's ſkin after bathing, leſt it ſhould deſtroy the effects of the water; others will even put cloths dipt in the water upon the child, and either put it to bed, or ſuffer it to go about in that condition. This is ſometimes done with impunity by grown perſons, who reſort to the famous ſpring at Malvern in Glouceſterſhire, for the cure of particular complaints of the cutaneous claſs; but it would be little ſhort of frenzy to make ſuch an experiment upon children.

The only way of ſecuring to an infant all the ſalutary effects of the cold bath, without the leaſt poſſibility of harm, is to prepare him for it in the ſlow and cautious manner before recommended. This may be accompliſhed, under favourable circumſtances, in five or ſix months. Rain or river water is fitter for the

purpoſe of bathing, than pump or ſpring water; though the latter, in caſe of neceſſity, may be uſed, after having been expoſed for ſome hours to the ſun or the atmoſphere. The child muſt not be dipped when its body is hot, or its ſtomach full, and ſhould be put only once under the water at each time of bathing. All the benefit, as before obſerved, depends upon the firſt ſhock, and the re-action of the ſyſtem. In order to prevent a ſudden and ſtrong determination of the blood to the head, it is always adviſeable to dip the child with this part foremoſt, and to be as expeditious as poſſible in waſhing away all impurities. I have been already ſo particular in my directions to have the young bather inſtantly wiped dry, and wrapped up in a ſoft warm blanket, that I need not repeat them; but I muſt add another injunction, which is, not to put the child to bed, but to keep it for ſome time in gentle motion, and to accompany the whole proceſs with lively ſinging.

ing. It is of far greater importance than moſt people may be aware of, to aſſociate in early life the idea of pleaſure and cheerfulneſs with ſo ſalutary an operation.

During the uſe of the lukewarm bath, the whole body is to be immerſed in it every night as well as morning. But, when recourſe is had to cold bathing, it muſt be uſed in the manner above preſcribed in the morning only. At night, it will be enough to waſh the lower parts; and even for this purpoſe a little warm water may be added to the cold in ſevere weather. Every danger will thus be avoided; every benefit will be ſecured; and the habit of perſonal cleanlineſs, being rendered familiar in childhood, will be retained through life, and will contribute very much to its duration and enjoyment.

SECTION III.

Of Children's Dreſs.

THERE is not any part of my profeſſional labours which I review with greater pleaſure, than my exertions in early life to reſcue infants from the cruel tortures of ſwathing, of rollers, and of bandages. When I firſt ventured to take up the ſubject, about half a century ago, it certainly required the ardour, the courage, the enthuſiaſm of youth, to animate my oppoſition, not only to the prevalence of cuſtom and the ſtubbornneſs of old prejudices, but to the doctrines of the Faculty themſelves. Abſurd as we may now think the practice of ſwaddling and wrapping up a child, till it was as ſtiff as a log of wood; the arguments in favour of a looſe and eaſy dreſs, which I made uſe of in my *Inaugural Diſſertation* *,

* De infantum vitâ conſervandâ.

were

were vehemently combated by the moſt eminent men, who at that time taught medicine in the Univerſity of Edinburgh. The reform which has ſince taken place, though not carried to the extent that it ought to be, is an encouragement to uſe leſs reſerve in condemning the remains of ſo pernicious a ſyſtem.

It cannot be deemed a matter of aſtoniſhment, while medical men declared themſelves advocates for ſuch a mode of clothing, that it ſhould be carried to the moſt dangerous exceſs by ignorant, buſy, or ſelf-conceited women. They fancied that the ſhape, beauty, and health of the infant depended wholly on the expertneſs of the perſon employed in dreſſing it. The midwife was to new-mould the head, and to ſhape every limb, according to her own fancy, and then to retain the parts, in the form ſhe gave them, by cloſe preſſure. Her ſtupid preſumption was farther encouraged by the vanity

of parents, who, too often deſirous of making a ſhow of the infant as ſoon as it was born, were ambitious to ſee it made up in perfect trim, and to have as much finery heaped upon it as poſſible. Thus it came to be thought as neceſſary for a midwife to excel in bracing and dreſſing an infant, as for a ſurgeon to be expert in applying bandages to a broken limb; and the poor child, as ſoon as it came into the world, had as many rollers and wrappers applied to its body, as if every bone had been fractured in the birth; while thoſe cruel ligatures were often ſo tight, as not only to gall and wound its tender frame, but even to obſtruct the motion of the heart, lungs, and other organs neceſſary for life.

In the progreſs of folly and vice, when the influence of depraved ſociety had extinguiſhed in the breaſts of many mothers every ſpark of natural affection, and had prompted them to abandon their

their children to the care of hirelings, the mercenary nurſe was glad, for the ſake of her own eaſe, to follow what Phyſicians taught and midwives practiſed. The infant was kept ſwathed in the form of an Egyptian mummy, as incapable of motion as the latter, and almoſt as deſtitute of every ſymptom or indication of life, except its unavailing cries. Though dwarfiſhneſs, deformity, diſeaſes, or death, muſt have frequently been the conſequence, yet the nurſe eſcaped all blame, as the bandages prevented any limbs from being broken, and the poor victim, bound hand and foot, might be thrown any where, and there left with the utmoſt indifference, while ſhe attended to her private concerns.

The only thing relating to the dreſs of infants which ſeemed to ariſe from any tenderneſs, was a regard to its warmth: unfortunately this was carried too far; and children ſuffered from the

the quantity, as well as from the tightneſs, of their clothes. Every child has ſome degree of fever after the birth; and if it be loaded with too many clothes, the fever muſt be increaſed, often to ſuch a degree, from the concurrence of other cauſes of heat, as to endanger the life of the infant. Even though no fever ſhould be excited, the greateſt debility muſt be the conſequence of keeping a child in a ſtate of perpetual waſte by exceſſive perſpiration. Beſides, in ſuch a condition, a child is liable to catch cold upon expoſure to the leaſt breath of air; and its lungs, relaxed by heat, and never ſufficiently expanded, are apt to remain weak and flaccid for life, ſo that every cold will have the moſt alarming tendency, and probably terminate in an aſthma, or a conſumption.

All the former evils, ariſing from the fallacy of medical theories, from the preſumption of midwives, the folly of parents,

parents, the unwillingneſs of ſome mothers to do their duty in becoming nurſes, the ſelfiſh views of hirelings, and the quite oppoſite, though no leſs fatal ſuggeſtions of miſguided tenderneſs, were farther aggravated by the imperious dictates of faſhion. Reaſon, experience, and true taſte, would have long ſince triumphed over ſilly ſpeculations, ignorance, and caprice, had not every conſideration been ſacrificed to prevailing forms; ſo that from the infant in its ſwaddling-clothes, to its grandmother in her ſhroud, dreſs muſt be wholly regulated by the etiquette of faſhion. Againſt this ſpecies of hitherto unſhaken tyranny, I ſhall therefore point the chief force of my arguments; after a few more ſtrictures on the abſurdity and perniciouſneſs of the other cauſe,—of tight and oppreſſive clothing,—which has really inflicted deeper wounds on population, than famine, peſtilence, and the ſword.

To

To begin with the error of phyſicians: it is almoſt inconceivable, how any ſet of men, who profeſſed to be the admirers and followers of nature, ſhould have been ſo totally blind to her obvious mode of proceeding in the preſervation of infant life. She forms the body ſoft and flexible, to facilitate its future growth: ſhe ſurrounds the *fœtus* in the womb with fluids, to prevent its receiving any injury from unequal preſſure, and to defend it againſt every thing that might in the leaſt cramp or confine its motions: ſhe adapts the ſame means to the ſafe delivery of the child, all whoſe bones are ſo griſtly and elaſtic as to yield with ſurpriſing pliancy to every obſtruction in the act of labour, and afterwards to reſume their proper form, unleſs reſtrained or diſtorted by the buſy interference of man. Yet people of pretended ſcience have been bold enough to aſſert, that a child, when it comes into the world, is almoſt a round ball; and that *it is the nurſe's part*

to aſſiſt nature in bringing it to a proper ſhape. We ſhould rather ſay, let the meddling hand be amputated, which dares to offer violence to the works of nature. If, through the inexpertneſs or impatience of the midwife, any of the child's delicate limbs have been fractured or put out of joint, they will require immediate care and proper bandages: but let not preſumptuous folly attempt to mend what nature has made perfect, or perverſely confine what was formed for the utmoſt freedom of motion and expanſion.

I have often had occaſion to obſerve, that the inſtinct of brutes is an unerring guide in whatever regards the preſervation of animal life. Do they employ any artificial means to mould the limbs of their young, or to *bring them to a proper ſhape?* Though many of theſe are extremely delicate when they come into the world, yet we never find them grow weak or crooked for want of ſwaddling

dling-bands. Is nature leſs kind or leſs attentive to the human ſpecies? Surely not: but we take the buſineſs out of nature's hands, and are juſtly puniſhed for our arrogance and temerity.

This argument may be rendered ſtill more unanſwerable by an appeal to the conduct of thoſe nations that approach neareſt to a ſtate of nature. They have no idea of the neceſſity of rollers or bandages to ſtrengthen the imaginary weakneſs, or *to bring to a proper ſhape* the imaginary deformities of their infants. They allow them from their birth the full uſe of every organ; carry them abroad in the open air; waſh their bodies daily in cold water; and give them no other food or phyſic but the truly medicinal and nutritive fluid, with which the mothers are benignantly ſupplied by nature. Such management tends to render their children ſo ſtrong and hardy, that by the time our puny infants get out of the nurſes' arms, theirs

are able to ſhift for themſelves. I reſerve ſome remarks on the perfect ſhape of thoſe ſavages for a diſtinct chapter, in which I mean to contraſt it with the dwarfiſhneſs and deformity of civilized nations.

Inſtead of conſidering a child at its birth as a round ball, which ought to be *brought to a proper ſhape* by a midwife's or a nurſe's aſſiſtance, I would have both theſe deſcriptions of people look upon its little body as a bundle of ſoft pipes, repleniſhed with fluids in continual motion, the leaſt ſtoppage of which is attended with imminent danger. Tight preſſure always weakens, and may ſometimes ſuſpend, with deadly effect, the action of the heart, the lungs, and all the vital organs; it impedes the circulation of the blood, and the equal diſtribution of nouriſhment to the different parts of the body: it diſtorts the pliant bones, cramps the muſcular powers, prevents growth, and renders the

the whole frame equally feeble and miſſhapen.

Even were reaſon ſilent on thoſe points, and were we unwarned of the bad effects of ſwathes and fillets by paſt experience, humanity ought to reſtrain us from putting a helpleſs innocent to the moſt cruel torture, ſqueezing its tender body into a preſs at the inſtant of its releaſe from former confinement, and loading it with chains as the firſt mark of our attention. I have often been aſtoniſhed at the inſenſibility of midwives and nurſes to the cries of infants while dreſſing—cries that ſeldom ceaſed till the powers of the poor creatures were exhauſted. Yet ſo far from feeling any emotion of pity, it is uſual for the midwife or the nurſe to ſmile at ſuch cries, and to endeavour to perſuade the mother, if within hearing, that the violence of the ſcream is a ſubject of joy, not of ſorrow, as it proclaims the child's health and vigour. I have already explained the cauſe and impor-

tant purpoſe of a new-born infant's firſt cry, to promote reſpiration and circulation. The loudneſs of that cry is indeed a proof of the ſtrength of the child's lungs; but every ſubſequent cry is the language of pain, the expreſſive tone of irritation and ſuffering. If you do not inſtantly attend to it, you may be guilty of murder. Think of the immenſe number of children that die of convulſions ſoon after the birth; and be aſſured, that theſe are much oftener owing to galling preſſure, or ſome external injury, than to any inward cauſe. I have known a child ſeized with convulſion fits ſoon after the midwife had done ſwaddling it, and immediately relieved by taking off the rollers and bandages. A looſe dreſs prevented the return of the diſeaſe; and though this will not always cure fits produced by tight clothing, as the effect of the injury may continue after the removal of the cauſe, yet it is one of the neceſſary means of relief, it being impoſſible that a patient can recover, as long

long as the cauſe which firſt gave riſe to the diſorder continues to act.

It may be proper in this place to give as clear, ſimple, and conciſe an account as I can of the nature of convulſions, that midwives and nurſes may learn to ſhudder at the idea of occaſioning, by their miſconduct, the moſt fatal, as well as the moſt frequent diſeaſes incident to childhood. The heads of infants being proportionably larger, and the nervous ſyſtem more extended, than in grown perſons, their nerves are more ſuſceptible of irritation; and convulſion fits are the conſequences of keen irritation, however excited. The great Boerhaave was of opinion, that moſt of the diſorders of children might be ranged under the claſs of convulſions. It is certain that all the different cauſes of uneaſineſs to a child form but one general or undiſtinguiſhing ſenſation of pain, which he has alſo but one way of expreſſing, namely, by his cries; and if theſe are not attended to,

and no relief is or can be given, acute and unmitigated pain commonly produces a fit. If any ſtronger reaſon need be urged for immediately attending to an infant's cries, it is that they are almoſt always owing to miſmanagement.

I admit, that the moſt incurable convulſions are thoſe which proceed from ſome original fault in the ſtructure of the brain itſelf, whence the nerves iſſue. But ſuch caſes ſeldom occur, though the brain has unqueſtionably been often injured, and convulſions occaſioned, by a midwife's preſumptuous attempts to model the ſcull of the new-born infant. I have already hinted at this deteſtable practice, and ſhall preſently make ſome farther remarks on its baneful prevalence, and its horrid effects.

Children are alſo ſubject to convulſions from cutting the teeth with difficulty, or from a feveriſh irritation of the ſyſtem at the approach of the ſmall-pox,

meaſles, and other eruptive diſeaſes. I am far from being diſpoſed to blame nurſes for what they cannot prevent; though I believe that the dangerous ſymptoms, which often attend teething in particular, are chiefly, if not wholly owing to the previous improper and enervating treatment of the child. The other convulſions here alluded to generally go off as ſoon as the eruptive diſeaſe, of which they may be called the forerunners, makes its appearance.

There is another cauſe of convulſions, for which midwives and nurſes flatter themſelves that they are not in any ſort blameable,—I mean acute pain in the ſtomach or bowels. But whence does this pain ariſe? either from the tight preſſure of thoſe parts; from the relaxing effect of a hot and impure atmoſphere; or from ſome acrid ſubſtance in the ſhape of food or of phyſic conveyed into the ſtomach, and irritating the alimentary canal. If you attend to the directions before

before given on the ſubject of air, waſhing, and cleanlineſs;—if you pour nothing down the infant's throat but the wholeſome, unvitiated juice, deſigned for him by nature;—if you ſlacken, inſtead of bracing your wrappers round his body; you may depend upon it that his ſtomach and bowels will never be ſo diſordered as to occaſion convulſions.

The only part of an infant's dreſs or covering which may be applied pretty cloſe, is a broad piece of thin flannel round the navel, to guard againſt any protruſion there, from the accidental violence of the child's cries. But take care not to make the preſſure too tight, or you will not only hurt the bowels, but, perhaps, cauſe in another place a much worſe rupture than that to which your precaution is directed. This is what happens in many ſimilar caſes, when people act from narrow or contracted views of the ſubject, and, in their eagerneſs to prevent ſome trifling

and

and merely poſſible inconvenience, too often occaſion irreparable miſchief. Again, then, let me caution midwives and nurſes againſt retaining any part of the old ſyſtem of tight ſwathing, as the injury it muſt do is certain, and the good or the convenience, to which it may ſeem adapted, is imaginary. I am now ſpeaking of its immediate bad effects, in ſqueezing the infant's delicate body, fretting his tender ſkin, keeping his little limbs in a ſtate of painful confinement, exciting his cries, and, by all theſe cauſes of nervous irritation, throwing him into convulſions. The female who can hear and ſee theſe effects of her own folly, and will yet perſiſt in it, after it is pointed out, certainly does not deſerve the name of a mother.

But the moſt cenſurable part of the uſual conduct of midwives and nurſes ſtill remains to be minutely examined and reprobated. It is not enough for them to keep up the ſhow of *helping nature*,

nature, as they call it, during the proceſs of a labour, though ſhe has been truly ſaid *to diſdain and abhor aſſiſtance*; but they preſume to mend her work after delivery, and to give a more proper form to the heads of new-born infants. The midwife will tell you, that the ſoft bones of a child's ſcull are often ſo diſplaced and ſqueezed together in coming into the world, that the head would be ſhapeleſs and frightful, were it not for her improving touches. Another reaſon is aſſigned by the nurſe for *her* meddling. She takes alarm at the imperfect indentation of the bones on the crown of the head, and not only ſtrives to preſs them cloſer and to brace them by means of fillets, but is careful to keep the head warmly covered, to prevent the poor baby, as ſhe ſays, from *catching his death* by the expoſure of thoſe open parts to the air. Deformity is the leaſt of the evils that attend ſuch acts of aſtoniſhing infatuation. The delicate texture of the brain is peculiarly liable

liable to be affected; and though neither convulſions nor any other perceptible complaint may immediately follow, yet a weakneſs of underſtanding, or a diminution of the mental powers, is often the conſequence, and defeats all the efforts of the beſt education afterwards.

The oſſification or growing hardneſs of the bones of a child, and particularly thoſe of the ſcull, is incomplete in the womb, to favor the purpoſes of eaſy and ſafe delivery. In conſequence of their ſoftneſs and pliancy, they admit of being ſqueezed together, and even of lapping over without injury, ſo as to make the head conform to the ſhape and dimenſions of the parts through which it is to be expelled. They will ſoon reſume their proper place, if left to the kind management of nature, and not tampered with by the profane finger of a conceited midwife or a ſilly nurſe.

As to the opening or imperfect indentation of the bones of the ſcull, it is owing

owing to the ſame cauſe, and deſigned for the ſame important purpoſe, to facilitate the birth of the infant. The free action of the external air is then neceſſary to promote the firmneſs and compactneſs of thoſe bones, and to make them preſs into each other, and form ſutures for the perfect defence of the brain, not only againſt blows and bruiſes, but colds and defluxions. Warm and tight covering directly counteracts all theſe benignant intentions of nature, and renders the ſcull a very weak ſhield for the ſecurity of its precious contents.

The curious diſtinction made by HERODOTUS, in the field of battle, between the ſculls of the Egyptians and the Perſians, has often been quoted to illuſtrate and confirm this doctrine. That hiſtorian having viſited the ſcene of action, where the ſlain of thoſe two nations had been ſeparated, ſays, that on examining their remains, he found the ſculls of the Egyptians ſo firm that the largeſt ſtones could

could hardly crack them, while thoſe of the Perſians were ſo thin and weak as to be eaſily fractured by a ſmall pebble. After ſtating the fact, he accounts for it by obſerving, that the Egyptians were accuſtomed from their infancy to go bareheaded; whereas the Perſians, on the contrary, always wore thick tiaras. Theſe were like the heavy turbans which they ſtill uſe, and which ſome travellers think the air of the country renders neceſſary. I believe with ROUSSEAU, that the generality of mothers will pay more regard to the ſuggeſtion of ſuch travellers than to the remark of the judicious hiſtorian, and will fancy the air of Perſia to be univerſal.

In oppoſition, however, to ſilly conceits and prejudices, I muſt aſſure my female readers, that there is no part of the human frame which ſuffers more from heat and preſſure than the head, and none of courſe which ought to be kept cooler and leſs encumbered. A thin, light

cap, ſlightly faſtened with a bit of tape, ſhould conſtitute the whole of an infant's head-dreſs, from the moment of its birth till the increaſed growth of the hair renders any other protection unneceſſary. As ſoon as nature ſupplies your child with this beſt of all coverings, never think of any thing more, even when you take him out into the open air, unleſs rain or intenſe heat or cold ſhould make the occaſional uſe of a very light and eaſy hat adviſable. I muſt alſo forbid the uſe of ſtay-bands to keep the poor infant's head as fixed and immoveable as if it were placed in a pillory. One would ſuppoſe that our heads were ſo badly ſecured by the Author of our being, that they would fall off if they were not held faſt by thoſe pernicious contrivances. It is ſtrange that women ſhould be ſo blind to the importance of letting the head move freely in every direction, in order to facilitate the diſcharge of the fluid excretions voided at the mouth!

It is not neceſſary to enter into minute details reſpecting the other parts of an infant's dreſs. Any nurſe of common ſenſe and docility will eaſily catch the ſpirit of my former arguments on the ſubject, and will pay due regard to the following general direction, with the writer's very plain and ſenſible remarks. "Rational tenderneſs (ſays this author) ſhews itſelf in making the dreſs *light*, *ſimple*, and *looſe*. By being as light as is conſiſtent with due warmth, it will neither encumber the infant, nor cauſe any waſte of his powers;—in conſequence of its ſimplicity, it will be readily and eaſily put on, ſo as to prevent many cries and tears, an object of infinite importance:—and its looſeneſs will leave full room for moving and ſtretching thoſe little limbs which have been long heaped together, and for the growth and expanſion of the entire frame." I before deſired the nurſe to have always a ſoft warm blanket in

readineſs to wrap up the infant on being taken out of the bath. In that wrapper the child ſhould be kept for at leaſt ten minutes, in gentle motion, and then dreſſed. A piece of fine flannel round the navel, a linen or cotton ſhirt, a flannel petticoat, and a linen or cotton robe, are ſoon put on; and where faſtenings are requiſite, they ſhould conſiſt of tape, without the dangerous uſe of pins. Their punctures and ſcratches are very irritating; and I believe the fact mentioned in my "Domeſtic Medicine" is far from being ſingular or extraordinary, where pins were found ſticking above half an inch into the body of a child, after it had died of convulſion fits, which in all probability proceeded from that cauſe.

No part of an infant's dreſs ſhould hang down above two or three inches lower than the feet. Long robes and long petticoats ſerve only to conceal the nurſe's inattention to cleanlineſs, and are,

are, even on that account, very improper, as well as cumberſome. The night clothes ſhould be much lighter than thoſe worn by day, from a due regard to the ſituation of the infant, who ſhould at all times, either in bed or out, experience nearly the ſame degree of warmth. Every moiſture or impurity ſhould be inſtantly removed, and as thoſe parts of the dreſs which are next the ſkin are conſtantly imbibing perſpirable matter, they ſhould be changed frequently. Indeed, the ſame clothes ought never to be kept on for many days together. Away with finery; but take care that the child is always clean and dry.

I wiſh I could here cloſe my remarks on dreſs, without having any juſt cauſe to apprehend a ſtronger reſiſtance to all my precepts from faſhion, than from folly, ignorance, and prejudice. Folly may be laughed out of its errors; ignorance may be inſtructed; and even the

ſtubbornneſs of prejudice may be borne down by the irreſiſtible force of argument. But faſhion bids defiance to the combined efforts of ridicule and reaſon. The only favorable circumſtance is, that, being fickle as well as imperious, it may, in its changeful whims, ſometimes fall in with the dictates of true taſte, and give both eaſe and elegance to the human form. This has been happily the caſe in the diſcontinuance of ſome of the moſt painful, aukward, and disfiguring articles of female dreſs; I mean the high-heeled ſhoe, and the whalebone ſtays, which, I hope, will never again make their frightful appearance.

But though faſhion has lately carried the looſe and light attire of our fair countrywomen almoſt to the extreme of nudity, yet it cruelly and abſurdly retains too much of the bracing method in childhood and youth, when the tender and growing frame requires the utmoſt caſe and freedom. It is true, we

no longer ſee the once familiar ſpectacle of a mother laying her daughter down upon a carpet, then putting her foot on the girl's back, and breaking half a dozen laces in tightening her ſtays, to give her a ſlender waiſt. But the abſurdity of the contrivance is only changed from ſtays, to diagonal bandages, or ribands, faſtened acroſs the breaſt and ſhoulders with ſtraining violence, to cauſe an unnatural prominence before, a frightful indentation behind, and a wiery ſtiffneſs in the motions of the pinioned arms. Yet this is called grace and elegance. The poor ſufferer in ſuch chains feels no relief from the diſcontinuance of the whalebone preſs, when ſhe finds that "ſilken fetters bind as faſt."

The breaſt and ſhoulders are not the only parts which are thus corded. The necks of young females ſeldom eſcape ſome ligature, that muſt impede the free acceſs of the blood to the head, and its return thence. Ribands or other

faſtenings of gloves above the elbow, bracelets on the wriſts, and garters either above or below the knee, ſeem as if purpoſely contrived to obſtruct circulation in the upper and lower extremities. The toes alſo, the motion of which is as free and eaſy in infancy as that of the fingers, are ſoon ſqueezed together, for fear of the young ladies becoming ſplay-footed. Even this is not enough, without occaſionally putting the feet into wooden ſtocks, to make a child turn out her toes, after all power of motion has been previouſly deſtroyed in them!

Boys, indeed, eſcape ſome of thoſe partial bandages; but they are ſubjected to a general preſſure no leſs injurious in the tight huſſar dreſſes before alluded to. Silly mothers are very impatient to ſtrip them of their looſe frocks, and to make them look like little men, which is often the cauſe of a much nearer reſemblance to monkeys. It is really aſtoniſhing that health and growth ſhould be perverſely

verſely ſacrificed to faſhionable ſmartneſs. All that nature requires in dreſs, is eaſe and comfortable warmth. In the progreſs of ſociety to refinement, decency and elegance are united with the former. At length, falſe taſte becomes diſſatisfied with natural ſimplicity and beauty, and introduces in their ſtead fantaſtic finery and cumbrous ornaments. The way to reform is plain and eaſy, if we have courage enough to ſhake off the tyranny of faſhion, and to conſult our reaſon and our feelings. To mothers ſo diſpoſed, the following details will not appear unintereſting.

The proper dreſs of infants has been already deſcribed with ſufficient minuteneſs. Very little alteration need be made for five or ſix years, except that of ſhortening the frocks and petticoats, when children begin to learn to walk; and ſoon after ſupplying them with eaſy ſhoes, adapted to the natural ſhape of the foot, neither too large,

which would cauſe a ſhuffling kind of pace, nor too ſmall ſo as to cramp motion, give preſent pain, and prepare the parts for greater ſufferings. Were this caution reſpecting the proper form of ſhoes to be attended to during life, it would not only prevent corns, and the painful conſequences of nails growing into the fleſh, but many excruciating maladies which may be traced to the tight preſſure of the toes, and ſuſpended circulation in the feet. A well-made ſhoe anſwers the two-fold purpoſe of cleanlineſs, and of defence againſt external injuries, including cold and moiſture. But when faſhion is more regarded than eaſe, we have no reaſon to wonder at the number of cripples we meet with tottering about, the victims of their own folly. Whatever changes may be thought neceſſary in the ſubſtance or materials of ſhoes, according to the age of the wearer, the difference of exerciſe, of weather, or of the ground for which they are intended, the grand principle

principle of having them made eaſy, and ſuited to the ſhape of the foot, ſhould never be loſt ſight of. The different direction alſo of the toes on each foot, renders it adviſable to have a correſponding difference in the form of each ſhoe, which ſhould not be afterwards changed from one foot to the other. It may be ſaid, that ſhoes will thus get a little crooked, and will the ſooner wear out on one ſide; but ſurely eaſe and health are infinitely ſuperior to ſuch trifling conſiderations.

It being of the firſt importance to keep the feet always clean, dry, and warm, children ſhould wear flannel or worſted ſocks in cold and wet weather. Beſides the other advantages attending this practice, it will be found one of the beſt preſervatives from chilblains, eſpecially if children, when cold, are not permitted to run to the fire, but are accuſtomed to warm themſelves with proper exerciſe. The ſocks ſhould be fitted

to

to the foot, as well as the ſhoes, and ſhould touch every part with gentle preſſure. If too ſhort or too tight, they will produce the effect already deſcribed; and if too big, ſo as to make folds within the ſhoes, they will gall and irritate the ſkin. It is farther deſirable to have ſocks and the feet of ſtockings made with different diviſions or ſpaces, like the fingers of gloves, to abſorb the perſpirable matter between the toes, and thus prevent the equally unpleaſant and unwholeſome effect of its ſettling there. Will the trouble of having the toes as well as the fingers fitted with proper covering, be deemed an objection of any conſequence by people who take infinite pains to adapt their dreſs, in a thouſand other inſtances, to the moſt inconvenient and unhealthy faſhions?

I leave grown perſons to be as ſilly as they pleaſe in the covering of their feet and legs, and in pre-diſpoſing thoſe parts for the gout, rheumatiſm, dropſy, and

and a variety of other complaints. But it is the height of cruelty to make children ſuffer through the ignorance, folly, or perverſeneſs of their parents. I muſt therefore inſiſt on the importance of woollen ſocks, and of woollen ſtockings, as ſoon as this additional article of dreſs ſhall be found neceſſary. Silk, cotton, or thread ſtockings, are far from being ſo well calculated to promote inſenſible perſpiration in the lower extremities, or to favor the motion of the fluids to the upper parts. They are even injurious in caſe of ſweat, either from exerciſe, or the nature of any individual's conſtitution. Inſtead of ſuffering the offenſive moiſture to eſcape, as worſted would, they retain it in cloſe contact with the ſkin, increaſe its putreſcent tendency, and not only check all farther perſpiration, but cauſe a reabſorption of a part of the matter already perſpired. Worſted ſtockings may be worn thicker or thinner according to the ſtate of the weather; and if the

ſhow

ſhow of greater finery be thought indiſpenſable for young gentlemen or young ladies in their *teens*, a pair of ſilk ſtockings may be drawn over the woollen ones, to gratify parental vanity. Inſtead of garters, the bad effect of which I have already noticed, ſtockings may be eaſily kept up by ſlips of tape faſtened to the band that encircles the waiſt in the dreſs of either ſex.

My former remarks on the tight huſſar dreſſes of little boys, who ought to be kept much longer in petticoats, and on the diagonal braces of young ladies, who are thus cramped and diſtorted, preclude the neceſſity of any farther obſervations concerning the due degree of eaſe which ſhould always be conſulted in the body-clothes of both ſexes. But it is proper to ſay ſomething of the changes in point of warmth, which may be requiſite in different ſtates of the weather. I have met with ſeveral plauſible arguments in favour of an uniformity

formity of dreſs in all ſeaſons; and the example of the great NEWTON has been urged, to induce us, like him, to wear camlet in winter as well as in ſummer. But though that illuſtrious philoſopher made himſelf immortal by his amazing diſcoveries, yet his natural life did not exceed the ordinary period of threeſcore years and ten. He cannot therefore be mentioned as a remarkable inſtance of longevity; and even had he lived many years longer, the number of his days might be more reaſonably aſcribed to his temperance, his regularity, the habitual ſweetneſs of his diſpoſition, and the exquiſite pleaſure ariſing from his ſucceſsful reſearches, than to the unvarying ſameneſs of his dreſs.

It does not therefore imply the ſmalleſt diminution of our reverence for the great NEWTON, if we look upon nature as a more unerring guide than any philoſopher. Obſerve how kindly ſhe varies the covering of animals, according to the tem-

temperature of the climate, and the difference of ſeaſons. Their hairy coat is longer and thicker in cold countries than in hot; and its growth and warmth are evidently increaſed, at the approach of winter, in the chilly regions of the north. Her care of the feathered race is diſplayed in a different manner. She gives the inſtinctive impulſe that makes them anticipate the rigours of winter, and wing their way to milder climates. Though men cannot ſhift their places of abode at every ſeaſon with the facility of birds of paſſage, they can profit by the example of nature's kind protection of other animals, and can accommodate their clothing to the ſenſible changes of the ſeaſon and weather.

Let it not be ſuppoſed that I am for recommending thoſe periodical faſhions of dreſs which are regulated by the dates of an almanack, in ſuch a country as ours, where the weather is ſo changeable,—where the cloſe of autumn is frequently

ſevere,

ſevere,—and where, not only in the ſpring, but even after the commencement of the ſummer months, we may ſay, in the words of the poet,

> That winter oft at eve reſumes the breeze,
> Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving fleets
> Deform the day delightleſs.

I ſhould be ſtill leſs inclined to encourage a ridiculous attention to every little change of the air and weather, as indicated by barometers and thermometers. Our ſenſes will afford us all neceſſary information on this head, without the aid of mathematical inſtruments. It is only in caſe of conſiderable tranſitions from heat to cold, or the contrary, that our feelings will direct us to guard againſt danger, by ſuitable changes of apparel. Poor nervous, delicate beings are, indeed, affected by a paſſing cloud, or a ſhifting breath of wind. But my rules are intended for healthy children, habituated to the cold bath every morning, and thus prepared to bear without

without uneaſineſs or injury, any ſlight variations of the weather which may take place in the courſe of the day. Yet even ſuch children are not to be expoſed in thin cottons to the keen action of the winter's cold, nor ſmothered with woollens in the ſultry heat of ſummer. Both thoſe manufactures, which are carried to great perfection in England, are well ſuited to the different ſeaſons. But I muſt obſerve, that fine linen is at all times the moſt proper covering next the ſkin on every part, except the feet and legs, for the reaſons before mentioned: it ſufficiently increaſes internal warmth, without any unneceſſary ſtimulus, or diſagreeable friction. Particular infirmities, or a defective perſpiration natural in old age, may render flannel or fleecy hoſiery adviſable; but linen next the ſkin is beſt ſuited to early life, and requires little trouble to keep it always clean.

The upper parts of the human frame do not ſtand in need of much covering. Nature

Nature takes care of the head; ſo that even the thin cap, recommended at an infant's birth, becomes wholly unneceſſary, either by day or by night, in three or four months. When children are taken out, according to my former intimation, a light, eaſy hat, made of ſtraw or beaver-fur, is very proper; and if the under-ſide of the brim be died green, it will afford a pleaſing relief to the eyes, and prevent the injurious effects of too glaring a light. The pink or vivid colours, ſometimes uſed by females in the linings of their hats or bonnets, may give for the moment a ſeeming freſhneſs to the cheek, but muſt very much impair the ſight by their dazzling brilliancy.

We ſhould not apply any covering whatever to the necks of young perſons of either ſex. When they grow up, in order to avoid being pointed at for ſingularity, they may preſerve ſome little ſhow of conforming to faſhion, but with-

out checking the circulation in ſo dangerous a part. Females muſt never be induced to wear tight necklaces; nor muſt males brace their collars, or uſe any ſtiffening in their ſtocks or cravats, through weak compliance with the whim of the day. Even keeping the neck very warm, though without any cloſe preſſure, increaſes its delicacy, or rather its ſenſibility, and renders it ſuſceptible of cold upon the leaſt expoſure.

The ſleeves of frocks, gowns, and coats, ſhould be made looſe, to leave the motion of the arms perfectly free and unconfined. Though gloves are unneceſſary except in very cold weather, yet I have not any ſtrong objection to their uſe, provided they ſlip on eaſily, and are made of porous materials, to facilitate the evaporation of the perſpirable matter. Leather is of all ſubſtances the leaſt adapted to this important purpoſe.

I ſhall

I ſhall conclude theſe obſervations on dreſs, with a picture of faſhionable abſurdities given in the laſt edition of my "Domeſtic Medicine." It is not from an over-weening fondneſs for my own remarks, that I occaſionally refer to, or make extracts from that work; but as ſome of the points there touched upon are here more fully diſcuſſed, it would be the effect of falſe delicacy on my part, to ſuppreſs now any thing uſeful or pertinent which then occurred to me.

After having applauded the judicious reformers of female dreſs, for their attention to health, ſimplicity, and real elegance, I expreſſed ſome concern at not being able to pay my own ſex the ſame compliment. "An affectation," I obſerved, "of what is called military ſmartneſs, ſeems to have converted their whole apparel into a ſyſtem of bandages. The hat is as tight as if it was intended for a helmet, or to defy the fury of a hurricane. Its form alſo being by no

means ſuited to the natural ſhape of the head, it muſt be worn for a conſiderable time, with very painful and unequal preſſure, before it can be made to fit its new block. The neck is bolſtered up and ſwathed with the moſt unnatural ſtiffneſs. Eaſy motion without, and free circulation within, are alike obſtructed. Blotches and eruptions in the face, head-achs, apoplexies, and ſudden deaths, may be often traced to this cauſe; and if we view its effects in another light, we ſhall not be ſurpriſed at any inconſiſtency in the language or conduct of people, who take ſo much pains to ſuſpend all intercourſe between the head and the heart."

"The cloſe preſſure," I added, "of the other articles of dreſs is equally reprehenſible. Narrow ſleeves are a great check upon the muſcular exerciſe of the arms. The waiſtcoat, in its preſent form, may be very properly termed a *ſtrait* one; and no doubt is, in many inſtances,

inſtances, an indication of ſome mental derangement. The wriſts and knees, but more particularly the latter, are braced with ligatures or tight buttoning; and the legs, which require the utmoſt freedom of motion, are ſcrewed into leathern caſes, as if to convey an idea that the wearer is ſometimes mounted on horſeback. To complete the whole, and in order that the feet may be kept in as tight a preſs as the head, when ſhoes are to be worn, the ſhape of the foot and the eaſy expanſion of the toes are never conſulted, but faſhion regulates the form of the ſhoe, ſometimes ſquare-toed, more frequently pointed, and always ſure to produce cramps and corns, the keen, the ſenſible announcers of every change of the weather. I have ſo long employed ſerious argument upon theſe ſubjects in vain, that I am now accuſtomed to view them with pleaſantry; and when I meet with ſuch figures, diſguiſed, and rendered truly aukward both in their mo-

tions and appearance, I cannot help thinking with SHAKESPEARE, "*that ſome of Nature's journeymen had made them, and not made them well, they imitate humanity ſo abominably!*"

SECTION IV.

Of the Injury done to Children by the too early and unneceſſary Uſe of Medicines.

OF all the abſurdities that prevail in the treatment of infants, there is none ſo groſsly repugnant to common ſenſe, as the frenzy of giving them phyſic before we give them food. They ſcarcely begin to breathe, when ſome purgative ſlop is forced down their throats, and the tender ſtomach and bowels are thrown into a ſtate of the moſt unnatural irritation. It often appeared to me very ſtrange, how people came to think that the firſt thing given to a child ſhould be drugs; but after duly conſidering the matter, I perceived it to be

the effect of ſuperficial knowledge. The more I examined this point, the more I was ſtruck with the truth of the philoſopher's remark, *that mere ignorance hath never done any material injury; that error alone is deſtructive; and that we do not err in things we are profeſſedly ignorant of, but in thoſe which we conceive we know.* To begin with medicines at the birth, is a ſtrong illuſtration of the miſchief of conceited ſkill.

It would never enter into the minds of perſons wholly unacquainted with medical ſcience, that evacuations ought to precede the firſt ſupplies of nouriſhment. But a little ſmattering of phyſic gave riſe to the idea of cleanſing the firſt paſſages as ſoon as poſſible, in order to bring away the black, viſcid, ſyrup-like ſubſtance contained in the inteſtines of a new-born infant. The fallacy of ſuch a ſuggeſtion can only appear upon a more accurate and comprehenſive view of the ſubject.

In the firſt place, the *meconium*, as it is called, generally paſſes ſoon after the birth, without any excitement but the mere effort of nature. When this does not take place, every deſirable purpoſe is ſure to be effected by the thin, wateriſh, and purgative quality of the mother's milk. Do you ſuppoſe that any chemical proceſs can equal this? Or do you imagine that the retention of the *meconium* for a few hours, can do half as much miſchief, as your oils and your ſyrups, your indigeſtible or your acrimonious traſh, muſt occaſion? But it was enough for midwives and nurſes to hear phyſicians, who knew very little more of the matter than themſelves, preſcribing things of an opening nature to purge off the remains of the *meconium*. This acquiſition of imaginary ſcience was too flattering to female vanity, not to be diſplayed upon every occaſion; and many a ſevere twinge have poor infants ſuffered, from a midwife's deſire to ſhew her profound ſkill in phyſic.

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I was once ſent for by an intimate friend, to look at a new-born infant who appeared to be in great agony. I ſoon diſcovered that the complaint was the belly-ache, cauſed by ſome injudicious purgative. As the midwife was preſent, I remonſtrated with her on the raſhneſs of thus tampering with an infant's delicate conſtitution. She replied in a tone of ſelf-ſufficiency and ſurpriſe, "Good God! Doctor, I only gave the proper phyſic to bring away the *economy*." I ſhould have ſmiled at her affectation of medical cant, and her ridiculous attempt to catch at the ſound of the word *meconium*, had not the ſerious miſchief ſhe had done ſuppreſſed every emotion of laughter. I reprimanded her in very pointed terms, and made her feel the burning bluſhes of confuſion, when I ſhewed that poiſon was as likely to be uſed for phyſic, as *economy* for the word *meconium*, from the ſame impulſe of conceited folly.

But

But the whole blame in ſuch caſes is not, as I have already intimated, to be laid to the charge of midwives and nurſes: the faculty themſelves have paid too little attention to the medical treatment of children; and, in conſequence of their ſuperficial knowledge of theſe important ſubjects, have ſanctioned errors of the moſt fatal tendency. I once heard a medical profeſſor of great celebrity ſay, that he had met with a caſe, where the *meconium* was not brought away for three months after the child's birth, and then only by means of ſtrong draſtic purges. Though one of the firſt anatomiſts in Europe, he was led into this miſtake by the blackiſh colour of the child's ſtools, which, for want of practical obſervation and experience, he could not account for but by aſcribing it to the ſuppoſed remains of the *meconium*. There is nothing ſo abſurd, ſays an ancient writer, which has not been uttered by ſome philoſopher. I am

ſorry

ſorry to add, that a ſimilar aſſertion might be made with ſtill greater truth concerning the profeſſors of phyſic.

It would be well, however, if the idea of the neceſſity of giving medicines to children, was confined to one opening doſe to purge off the *meconium*. Unfortunately, the error committed at the birth is repeated again and again; and ſeldom ceaſes but with the poor creature's life. Opiates are deemed neceſſary to make it ſleep; carminatives to expel wind, or to cure the gripes; laxatives and emetics to cleanſe the ſtomach; and ten thouſand other unavailing and pernicious contrivances to relieve complaints, which are entirely the effects of bad nurſing, and which admit of no remedy but by a complete reform in that department.

When a medical man is ſent for to attend an infant, his firſt duty is to inquire into the conduct of the nurſe; and if

if there are faults, to have them rectified. He will ſeldom find occaſion to preſcribe any thing elſe. There cannot be a greater error than to ſuppoſe that the faults of nurſes may be repaired by drugs. Medicine, however ſkilfully adminiſtered, cannot ſupply the place of proper nurſing; and when given without ſkill, which I fear is too often the caſe, it muſt be productive of much miſchief. The following facts will place this matter in the cleareſt light.

About forty years ago, when I undertook the charge of a large branch of the Foundling Hoſpital at Ackworth in Yorkſhire, I found that the children at nurſe had till then been attended by the country apothecaries, who, ſure of being paid for their drugs, always took care to exhibit them with a liberal hand. Every cupboard and every ſhelf in the houſe was filled with phials and gallipots. Under ſuch treatment, half the children died annually. As it was evident to me, that this

this mortality could not be natural, I ſuggeſted to the governors, that the children had little or no occaſion for medicines, and that with proper care they would thrive and do well. A new arrangement took place. The nurſes were forbidden, at their peril, to give any medicine but what ſhould be ordered by me; and were adviſed to rely more on the faithful diſcharge of their duty than on doſes of phyſic. The conſequence was, that the expence for drugs did not amount to a hundredth part of what it had been before, and that not above one in fifty of the children died annually. An opportunity of making experiments on ſo extenſive a ſcale ſeldom occurs. I had at that time the ſole ſuperintendence of an immenſe number of children ſpread over a fine healthy country, where the nurſes found it their intereſt to do in every reſpect what I deſired, as they loſt their appointment in caſe of the leaſt neglect. The happy reſult of the plan left no doubt of its

propriety. It was theory verified by practice.

A little reflection would ſoon ſatisfy an attentive obſerver of nature, that ſhe never deſigned the young of any ſpecies to be brought up by the aid of medicine. Other animals, following the guidance of inſtinct, never fail in this important buſineſs: but man becomes in all things the creature of art, and is miſled by it. I have frequently met with inſtances of families, who had loſt every child while they truſted to phyſic and employed the faculty, but who at length becoming wiſe through deſpair, and conſidering that their offspring could only die, left off the uſe of medicine altogether, and from that time never loſt a ſingle child. If we wiſh for a more general illuſtration of the effects of thoſe two different modes of treatment, we ſhall find it in that part of the iſland where I was born (North Britain), and where the common people have a ſtrong and very juſt averſion to giving

giving their children medicines. The fruits of their good ſenſe are diſplayed in a numerous and healthy progeny. But punineſs, ſickneſs, and death, find their way, in company with the doctor, into the houſes of parents of higher rank. As the children of the latter are often obſerved not to thrive, the common remark is, *No wonder! they gave the poor things phyſic.*

It is indeed poſſible, that caſes may occur to juſtify the uſe of medicines; but this very ſeldom happens when children are properly nurſed, unleſs the poor creatures may have inherited debility from the enervated conſtitutions of their parents. I may go farther and aſſert, that even when the frequent or continued uſe of medicines is deemed neceſſary, a child kept in exiſtence by the help of drugs has little reaſon to thank its parents for preſerving its life. It lives only to be a burthen to ſociety; and never can be ſaid to enjoy life ſo much

much as to render the poſſeſſion of it a bleſſing. In all other caſes of ſlight and accidental indiſpoſition, I do not heſitate to give a decided opinion, that medicines do injury at leaſt twenty times for once that they do good.

A late writer on the management of children (NELSON) thinks it a matter of regret that they can ſeldom be brought to take phyſic without force. When I conſider the almoſt infinite number of young martyrs to medicine, inſtead of lamenting the circumſtance here ſtated, I rejoice at it, from the fulleſt conviction, that if children had no reluctance to ſwallow drugs, we ſhould loſe a great many more of them. I know it is a common practice with many mothers, to lay a child on its back, to ſtop its noſe, and force the medicine down its throat. This is adding the danger of ſuffocation, and the certainty of diſguſt, to the hazard of a doſe too often in its own nature injurious. Bribing and coaxing

coaxing children, as ſoon as they become ſuſceptible of ſuch impreſſions, are almoſt equally bad. Telling a child, that, if it will take its phyſic, it ſhall have a reward, is informing it beforehand, that the potion is unpleaſant; and, after that, the child is ſure to refuſe it, be it rendered ever ſo palatable. Where medicine is abſolutely neceſſary, which, as I ſaid before, is very ſeldom the caſe, it may be ſo contrived as to make a part of the child's food. Beſides, a child ſhould be accuſtomed very early to refuſe nothing; and it will not refuſe to take medicine. It will act from habitual ſubmiſſion to authority,—not from the cruel impulſe of force, or the pernicious allurement of a bribe.

I could here point out many eaſy contrivances to make children take phyſic, were I not aſſured that they are already too often poiſoned by it. If drugs do not directly produce infirmity, diſeaſes, or death, theſe are ſure to be

ultimately the conſequences of ſubſtituting medicine in the place of proper nurſing, and fooliſhly ſuppoſing that the former can ſupply the defects of the latter. Art opens all her reſources in vain; nor can the greateſt efforts of human ingenuity make amends for the want of good air, cleanlineſs, healthy breaſt-milk, wholeſome food, and proper exerciſe. The neglect of any of theſe eſſential points is attended with irreparable miſchief; and, on the contrary, a due attention to theſe precludes the neceſſity of any medical aid. Yet ſo ſtrangely addicted are ſome women to drench infants with drugs, that, when I employed nurſes in my own family, it was with difficulty I could prevent them from giving medicines privately to the children. I hope that fathers will profit by this hint, to exert their utmoſt vigilance and authority in the like ſituation.

There is not any notion which I have found it more difficult to root out of the

the minds of mothers, than that children abound with ill-humours, and that theſe can be carried off only by purging medicines. If a ſpot appear on the ſkin, the child muſt have his guts ſcoured out, to make the offenſive pimple vaniſh, and to *ſweeten his blood*, as the mothers call it. They little know, and can hardly be made to conceive, that all purgatives, however mild in their operation, throw the ſtomach into immediate diſorder, weaken its digeſtive powers, vitiate the juices deſigned for the ſolution of food, and thus prevent the due preparation of the chyle whence the blood is formed. This is the ſure way to generate noxious humours, inſtead of expelling them; and to taint or impoveriſh the vital ſtream, inſtead of purifying it.

The other medicines, which the fears and follies of mothers have introduced into the nurſery, are almoſt as pernicious. Had I leiſure to make out the

long liſt of them, with a deſcription of their effects at an early age, it would appear that they ought to be more properly denominated poiſons than remedies. They always do ſome injury; they cannot do any good: they are adminiſtered either frivolouſly, or for the relief of complaints which are cauſed by bad nurſing, and which do not admit of a *medical* cure. To truſt to phyſic for what phyſic cannot effect, is aggravating the evil of former errors by a ſtill greater one, and quickening a poor infant's career to the grave. Were a law to be made and ſtrictly enforced, which ſhould abſolutely prohibit the adminiſtering of drugs to children, I am ſure it would ſave the lives of thouſands every year in this metropolis alone.

I have elſewhere made a few remarks on the uſual conduct of London mothers, whoſe faith in medicine does not ſeem in the leaſt abated by the moſt

ſtriking and the moſt lamentable proofs, not merely of its inefficacy, but of its perniciouſneſs. Whenever any of their children appear indiſpoſed, or do not ſeem to thrive, which muſt be frequently the caſe where they are ſo badly nurſed, away the mothers run to the apothecary. His candor is too often checked, and even his judgment is liable to be biaſſed by his immediate intereſt. He derives his ſupport from the ſale of his drugs, and will ſeldom reſiſt the temptation to ſend large ſupplies where he knows the parents are in a condition to pay. Phyſic, in a variety of forms, is ſubſtituted for the only rational means of reſtoring the child's health, ſome neceſſary change of air, exerciſe, clothing, or diet: the miſchief begun by the nurſe is completed by the doctor; and death comes ſooner or later to put an end to the ſufferings of the tortured victim.

It gives me pain to write any ſtrictures on the intereſted views and repre-

henſible practice of even the lower orders of the faculty; but the evil is of ſuch magnitude, and ſo truly alarming, that it cannot be paſſed over in ſilence, nor mentioned without burſts of ſtrong indignation. The weakneſs and the fears of mothers bring in the apothecary; and it requires an effort, to which not one in a thouſand is equal, to get him out again. A bold buſy man of that profeſſion wants only a few timid mothers to make his fortune. But, mercy on the poor babes, who, to make his chariot roll, muſt ſwallow drugs every day! Yet, ſuch is the infatuation of mothers, that, if this be not done, they think their children neglected, and diſmiſs one apothecary to make way for another, who adminiſters medicines with a more liberal, or rather a more deſtructive hand.

If the apothecary be a dangerous man, the quack is ſtill more ſo. Yet I hardly ever knew a mother or nurſe who had not by her the noſtrum of ſome quack, with

with which ſhe every now and then kept doſing the infant. Were the boaſted ſpecific, like the anodyne necklace, a mere chip in porridge, it would do no harm to the child, and would ſerve only to amuſe the mother, and to levy a contribution on her credulity. But it is very often made up of active ingredients, which ought to be adminiſtered with the greateſt circumſpection. Moſt of the noſtrums given to children are ſtrong opiates or purgatives, of a nature very different from the innocent efficacy of a good nurſe's lullabies. They may quiet or compoſe the infant, and ſeem to give it caſe for a time, but they never fail to deſtroy the powers of digeſtion, and to induce univerſal debility, with all its baneful conſequences.

There is, however, another claſs or deſcription of quack medicines, which, though they cannot kill with greater ultimate certainty than the former, are

more ſudden and violent in their fatal mode of operation, I mean the cakes and powders, and various other compoſitions, which are advertiſed for the pretended cure of worms. A child's pale looks frighten the mother into a belief that worms are the cauſe; and ſhe goes immediately to the *worm-doctor*, who adminiſters his draſtic doſes, without the leaſt regard to the delicacy of the patient's conſtitution. His ſole aim is to expel worms; and, if any appear, he triumphs in the ſhow of ſucceſs, though always attended with great danger, and ſometimes with death. I have known a noſtrum of this kind to kill in twenty-four hours;—but that was nothing to the quack; he had ſold his medicine; and he gave himſelf little concern about the injury it might do in particular caſes.

I would not have ſaid ſo much of this ſhocking indifference to murder, had I not ſeen proofs of it, and in ſome too, who

who pretended to eminence in that line. I once told a lady, that her daughter was in a deep conſumption, and that ſhe ought to go into the country, to take exerciſe on horſeback, drink aſſes' milk, and uſe a light reſtorative diet. But, inſtead of following this advice, ſhe took her daughter to a very celebrated worm-doctor, who ſoon relieved her from all her trouble.

Here I cannot help lamenting that confidence in worm-powders or worm-cakes is not confined to the weakeſt of the fair ſex, but is diſcovered even in men of rank and talents. I have ſeen, though with heart-felt concern, names of the firſt reſpectability ſubſcribed to certificates of the efficacy of ſome of thoſe noſtrums. I am far from queſtioning the integrity of the perſons who ſigned ſuch papers; but they certainly knew not what they did. They fancied they were only atteſting a plain matter of fact, though the thing was far beyond

beyond the poſſible reach of their judgment or knowledge. They had ſeen a quack medicine given to a child, and had alſo ſeen worms afterwards voided by that child. What then? As the ſame effect might be produced by very dangerous poiſons, how could people, wholly ignorant of the ingredients, tell whether the operation aſcribed to them was not at the riſk of the child's conſtitution, or of it's life? Even ſuppoſing that ſome apparent good and no *perceptible* miſchief attended the experiment in one or two caſes, are they ſufficient grounds for the general recommendation of any *ſecret* medicine, to which the lives of thouſands of children yet unborn may be ſacrificed? I hope theſe remarks will prevent men of character from raſhly giving a ſanction to the poſſible deceptions of quackery, and will alſo leſſen the reſpect which individuals or the public at large may feel for ſuch inconſiderate teſtimonials.

To

To reſume now my detail of various inſtances of maternal weakneſs; I have to obſerve, that the ſtrangeſt, and not the leaſt miſchievous infatuation of all, conſiſts in giving medicines to children in good health, with the ſilly view of preventing diſeaſes. The ſpring and fall are the periods conſecrated to phyſic in the calendar of mothers and nurſes. At thoſe ſeaſons, if children are ever ſo well, they muſt have a doſe or two of what is falſely called an innocent purge, to keep them pure and hearty. Thus they are made really ſick, for fear they ſhould become ſo; and their conſtitutions are enfeebled by the perverſe means employed to ſtrengthen them. I have already ſaid ſo much of the bad conſequences which muſt reſult from the uſe of laxatives, eſpecially in childhood, that no farther diſſuaſives againſt ſo abſurd a practice ſeem neceſſary, except this one remark; that purging, like bleeding, induces a habit which cannot be left off with ſafety.

ſafety. Every purge paves the way for another, till the bowels are deſtroyed. Such medicines, therefore, ſhould never be adminiſtered but in caſes of actual illneſs, and to expel ſome greater poiſon than themſelves.

As this is a point which cannot be too ſtrongly enforced, I ſhall lay before the reader Mr. Locke's ſentiments on the ſame ſubject. They derive double weight from his medical ſkill, and from the extraordinary preciſion of his manner of reaſoning upon any topic. As he was regularly bred to phyſic, he is exempt from the ſuſpicion incurred by ſome later philoſophers, of having written under the influence of prejudice againſt the faculty. "Perhaps," ſays he, "it will be expected that I ſhould give ſome directions of phyſic, *to prevent diſeaſes;* for which I have only *this one, very ſacredly to be obſerved,* NEVER TO GIVE CHILDREN ANY PHYSIC FOR PREVENTION. The obſervation of what I have

I have already adviſed will, I ſuppoſe, do that better, than the *ladies' diet-drinks*, or *apothecaries' medicines*. Have a great care of tampering that way, leſt, inſtead of *preventing*, you *draw on* diſeaſes. Nor even upon every little indiſpoſition is phyſic to be given, or the phyſician to be called to children, eſpecially if he be a *buſy man*, that will preſently fill their windows with gallipots, and their ſtomachs with drugs. It is ſafer *to leave them wholly to nature*, than to put them into the hands of one forward to tamper, or that thinks children are to be cured, in ordinary diſtempers, by any thing but diet, or a method very little different from it; it ſeeming ſuitable both to my reaſon and experience, that the tender conſtitutions of children ſhould have as little done to them as is poſſible, and as the abſolute neceſſity of the caſe requires."

To add any thing by way of comment or illuſtration to language at once ſo

ſo clear and ſo forcible, would betray the greateſt weakneſs. It is enough for me to quote ſo unexceptionable an authority in ſupport of my favourite doctrine. The chief deſign of the preſent treatiſe is to ſuperſede the uſe of medicines in early life, and to ſhew how health may be effectually preſerved by good nurſing alone. An attention to the rules here laid down is the only method of preventing diſeaſes, with which I am acquainted. A child uſed to the cold bath, and to the full enjoyment of freſh air, cannot be liable to coughs, colds, ſore eyes, or defluxions. A clean dry ſkin, never relaxed by foulneſs or heat, will favour the eſcape of noxious or redundant humours, while exerciſe will not ſuffer the ſeeds of corruption to lurk in any part of the frame. Inſtead of baneful phyſic, let your infant have the aliment prepared for him by nature; and you may be ſure that the milk of a healthy, temperate nurſe, will never give him the gripes or the cholic;

cholic; it will nouriſh, but not inflame him; it will keep the habit pure, the action of the blood regular, and the ſurface of the whole body free from blotches or eruptions. Indeed, I know of no diſeaſe againſt which a child may not be ſecured by the rational conduct of his nurſe. The pre-diſpoſing cauſes of all the complaints of infants, are the weakneſs of the digeſtive powers, and the irritability of the nervous ſyſtem. Both are obviated by the method I propoſe. The ſtomach is ſupplied, but not overcharged, with ſuch food as is ſuited to its ſtrength; and every thing that may irritate the nerves, or give riſe to convulſions, is averted with all poſſible care. Even in the midſt of contagion, or of epidemical diſtempers, the purity of a well-nurſed child's habit will correct the malignity of the infection, and diſarm it of its uſual terrors.

The earneſtneſs with which I have recommended inoculation in another work,

work, may ſeem a little inconſiſtent with the doctrine here laid down: but it is becauſe very few children are nurſed according to my plan, that I think it adviſable to guard them all againſt the poſſible danger of catching the ſmall-pox by accident. Beſides, it is of importance to be able to command time, place, and circumſtances; particularly as I have ſhewn in my "Domeſtic Medicine," with what eaſe and ſafety the operation may be performed by mothers and nurſes, without the leaſt occaſion for any farther medical advice or aſſiſtance.

SECTION V.

Of the Food proper for Children.

THE pernicious folly of making phyſic precede food at an infant's birth is, I hope, ſufficiently expoſed in the former ſection; and notice is there taken of the admirable manner, in which the thin, diluted,

diluted, and gently opening properties of the mother's milk, are adapted to every medicinal as well as alimentary purpoſe. Nature does not afford, nor can art contrive, any effectual ſubſtitute for that delicious fluid. By degrees the milk acquires conſiſtence, and affords greater nouriſhment to the child, as he becomes more capable of digeſting it. At length, his bodily ſtrength increaſing, and his teeth burſting through the gums, he can take more ſolid and ſubſtantial food, which requires ſtill greater powers of digeſtion. Theſe changes are ſo obvious, that they cannot be miſtaken. Ignorance is pleaded in vain, and the leaſt deviation from ſo plain a road to health, is puniſhed with laſting injury. The infant, after having derived its whole ſuſtenance and growth, while in the womb, from the mother's juices, cannot without the greateſt danger have its ſupplies totally altered at its birth. It muſt ſtill be fed from the ſame congenial ſource, or the ſhock of

a ſudden and unnatural change will prove very trying to its tender conſtitution.

In my advice to mothers at the time of lying-in, I endeavoured to convince them of the imminent danger to their own health, which would ariſe from their neglect of the moſt ſacred of all duties, that of ſuckling their children. It is an obligation ſo ſtrongly enforced by nature, that no woman can evade the performance of it with impunity. But cheerful obedience to this ſovereign law is attended with the ſweeteſt pleaſure of which the human heart is ſuſceptible. The thrilling ſenſations, as before obſerved, that accompany the act of giving ſuck, can be conceived only by thoſe who have felt them, while the mental raptures of a fond mother at ſuch moments are far beyond the powers of deſcription or fancy. She thus alſo enſures the fulfilment of the promiſes made by the beſt writers on this ſub-

ject—ſpeedy recovery from childbed, the firm eſtabliſhment of good health, the exquiſite ſenſe of wedded joys, the capacity of bearing more children, the ſteady attachment of her huſband, the eſteem and reſpect of the public, the warm returns of affection and gratitude from the objects of her tender care, and, after all, the ſatisfaction to ſee her daughters follow her example, and recommend it to others.

Though I expreſſed myſelf pretty fully on this head in the place above referred to, yet when I reconſider it, new ideas ariſe in my mind, and I am more and more impreſſed with a ſenſe of its importance. People have been often amuſed with illuſions of univerſal remedies. Long experience has almoſt deſtroyed my faith in the efficacy of even the beſt ſpecifics. But were I called upon to point out any one remedy for the greateſt part, not only of the diſeaſes, but of the vices alſo of ſociety, I would

declare it to be the ſtrict attention of mothers to the nurſing and rearing of their children. "Would you have mankind return all to their natural duties," ſays the eloquent ROUSSEAU, in one of his fine ſallies of ſentimental enthuſiaſm, "begin with mothers of families: you will be aſtoniſhed at the change this will produce. Almoſt every kind of depravation flows ſucceſſively from this ſource: the moral order of things is broken, and nature quite ſubverted in our hearts: home is leſs cheerful and engaging: the affecting ſight of a riſing family no more attaches the huſband, nor attracts the eyes of the ſtranger: the mother is leſs truly reſpectable, whoſe children are not about her: families are no longer places of reſidence: habit no longer enforces the ties of blood: there are no fathers, nor mothers, children, brethren, nor ſiſters: they hardly know, how ſhould they love, each other? each cares for no one but himſelf; and when home affords only a melancholy ſolitude,

tude, it is natural to ſeek diverſion elſewhere.

"But," continues he, "*ſhould mothers again condeſcend to* NURSE THEIR CHILDREN, manners would form themſelves: the ſentiments of nature would revive in our hearts: the ſtate would be repeopled: this principal point, this alone would re-unite every thing. A taſte for the charms of a domeſtic life, is the beſt antidote againſt corruption of manners. The noiſe and buſtle of children, which is generally thought troubleſome, becomes hence agreeable: they render parents more neceſſary, more dear to each other, and ſtrengthen the ties of conjugal affection. When a family is all lively and animated, domeſtic concerns afford the moſt delightful occupation to a woman, and the moſt agreeable amuſement to a man. Hence, from the correction of this one abuſe, will ſoon reſult a general reformation: nature will quickly re-aſſume all her rights: let

wives but once again become mothers; and the men will preſently again become fathers and huſbands."

To this ſketch, drawn by the pencil of ſo great a maſter, I ſhall only add, that the happy conſequences of ſuch a reform would be no leſs ſtriking in a medical than in a moral point of view. A ſtop would be put to the cruel ravages of death in early life. The long catalogue of infantile afflictions would almoſt become a blank, or contain nothing to excite alarm. Every child, invigorated by his mother's milk, would, like the young HERCULES, have force ſufficient to ſtrangle in his cradle any ſerpents that might aſſail him. Occaſional illneſs would be to him only part of a neceſſary courſe of diſcipline, to enure him by times to bear pain with manly fortitude. In ſhort, health, ſtrength, and beauty, would take place of puninefs, deformity, and diſeaſe; ſociety would be renovated; and man, inſtead of

of dwindling away, as he now does, by a gradual degeneracy, would ſoon riſe to the original perfection of his nature.

If you entertain any doubt of the truth of what is here advanced, look at other parts of the animated creation, and your doubts will immediately vaniſh. Wild animals never degenerate: they bring forth and rear their young with undiminiſhed ſtrength. And why? Becauſe the females, obedient in every thing to the impulſes of nature, nurſe their offſpring, and watch over them with the moſt tender ſolicitude, till they can provide for themſelves. Not only the inhabitants of the howling wilderneſs, the ſhe-wolf and the fell tigreſs, but even the monſters of the great deep, draw out the breaſt, and give ſuck to their young. Will woman then ſuffer herſelf to be ſtigmatiſed as the only unfeeling monſter that can deſert the iſſue of her own womb, and abandon it to the care of another? Will ſhe alone entail the curſe

of her unnatural conduct on her hapleſs poſterity?

But let me vindicate the female character from ſo foul a reproach. It is not ſo much the fault of the women, as of what is improperly called civilized ſociety. In its ruder ſtate, this never happened. It never happens now among ſavage nations. I have already mentioned ſome remarkable inſtances of their parental tenderneſs. The influence of ſo ſtrong a principle can be weakened only by the prevalence of vice, and of artificial refinement. Wherever an innocent ſimplicity of manners prevails, the children are not brought up by proxy: the women are not ſatisfied to be mothers by halves, as an old writer expreſſes it,—to bring forth, and then to caſt off their offspring. They think with him, that nothing can be more contrary to nature, than ſuch an imperfect ſort of mother, who, after having nouriſhed in her womb, and with

with her blood, ſomething which ſhe did not ſee, refuſes now her breaſt-milk to what ſhe ſees living, become a human creature, and imploring the aſſiſtance of its parent!

In the poliſhed, or rather the depraved circles of ſocial life, thoſe ſentiments are either unfelt, or diſregarded. Women, enervated by luxury, allured by a falſe taſte for miſtaken pleaſures, and encouraged by ſhameleſs example, are eager to get rid of their children as ſoon as born, in order to ſpend the time thus gained from the diſcharge of their duty in diſſipation or indolence. Let not huſbands be deceived: let them not expect attachment from wives, who, in neglecting to ſuckle their children, rend aſunder the ſtrongeſt ties in nature. Neither conjugal love, fidelity, modeſty, chaſtity, nor any other virtue, can take deep root in the breaſt of a female that is callous to the feelings of a mother. I am aware of the little tricks that are ſo often played

played off by new-married women to keep up the ſhow of a wiſh to nurſe their children, while every engine is ſecretly employed to make the deluded huſband conjure her to relinquiſh her deſign, for fear of the injury it might do her conſtitution. If ſhe has not injured her health by vice, nurſing will not leſſen, but increaſe her ſtrength; and if any conſtitutional defect renders her wholly unfit for ſuckling her child, ſhe ought to abſtain from procreation. The woman who cannot diſcharge the duties of a mother, ought again and again to be told, that ſhe has no right to become a wife.

In caſes of accidental injury or diſeaſe, where it may be impoſſible for the mother, or highly improper on her part, to give the child the breaſt, ſhe is to be pitied in being thus deprived of the greateſt pleaſure of life, the pleaſure of feeding and of rearing her own offspring. But the number of thoſe women who really

really *cannot* ſuckle is very ſmall, compared with thoſe who *will not*. The latter excite our indignation—not our pity: they ſtifle every emotion of tenderneſs; they are deaf to the voice of nature; they ſacrifice the moſt important duty to vicious purſuits; and madly barter joys that will pleaſe on every reflection, for ſuch as never can bear to be recalled.

Little do thoſe diſſipated mothers think of what their poor infants are likely to ſuffer, when committed to the care of hirelings. Ought they not to conſider, that the woman who parts with her own babe to ſuckle one of theirs, unleſs ſhe is impelled by the keeneſt diſtreſs, gives a proof in the firſt inſtance of her not being a good mother? How then is it to be expected that ſhe ſhould become a good nurſe? Even ſhould ſhe acquire, in time and from habit, a tender affection for her foſter-child, ought not a mother of

of any ſenſibility to take alarm at the idea of having that child's love transferred from herſelf to a ſtranger? Indeed, the claims of the nurſe who does her duty faithfully, are greatly ſuperior to thoſe of the parent who neglects her's. It was a ſaying of SCIPIO AFRICANUS, *that he took her to be more his mother, who had nurſed him for two years, though ſhe had not brought him forth, than her who, after ſhe had brought him into the world, deſerted and abandoned him.* But I am ſtill better pleaſed with the anecdote related by VAN SWIETEN, of a Queen of France, who gave her ſon ſuck, and would not deſiſt from ſo doing even when ſhe was taken ill of an intermitting fever. It happened during one of the fits, that another matron gave her breaſt to the thirſty and crying child; at which the queen was ſo much diſpleaſed, that ſhe thruſt her finger into the child's mouth, in order to excite a vomiting, being unwilling that another ſhould perform any part of a mother's office.

I ſhall

I ſhall not enlarge any farther on this ſubject. I hope I have ſaid enough to excite good mothers to the moſt aſſiduous obſervance of their duty, and to warn others of the evils inſeparable from the neglect of it. Such as may reſolve to obey the dictates of nature and reaſon, will find the following directions of ſome uſe in the proſecution of ſo laudable a purpoſe.

The mother, after delivery, ſhould be indulged with a few hours' ſleep, to recover from the fatigue which ſhe has lately undergone, and to allow due time for the ſecretion of the milk, before the infant is put to the breaſt. The child can ſuffer no inconvenience from this delay. Being replete with blood and juices, he has not the leaſt occaſion for any freſh ſupply of nutriment, till the mother is prepared by neceſſary repoſe to give him the grateful and ſpontaneous beverage. I before pointed out the means to be employed when the nipples

nipples are not ſufficiently prominent to afford a proper hold. But whatever the form of the nipples may be, they ſhould be waſhed with a little warm milk and water, in order to remove the bitter viſcid ſubſtance, which is furniſhed round them to defend the tender parts from excoriation. I would alſo adviſe the mother, during the whole time of her nurſing, to waſh the nipples, immediately after giving ſuck, in warm water, whenever this can be conveniently procured; and, in caſe the ſupplies of the nutritive fluid are very copious, or ſeem to exceed the infant's wants, ſhe may always preſs out a little of the milk before the child is put again to the breaſt, as the firſt drops iſſuing from the fountain at every treat are the moſt liable to ſourneſs and putrefcency.

I need not urge a fond mother freely to give her child what nature freely produces. The only check in this reſpect is not to ſuffer the infant to ſleep at the breaſt,

breaſt, or to ſuck till vomiting enſues. But any attempts to entice the baby to the uſe of ſpoon-meat are ſtill more improper. This is a common practice, not only with hired nurſes, but even with affectionate mothers, from a fooliſh though prevalent idea of leſſening the demands on the breaſt, or of ſtrengthening the child with additional nouriſhment. If the nurſe be not irregular in her own manner of living, ſhe need not fear having a plentiful ſupply for the infant; and ſhe may reſt aſſured that her milk is far better ſuited to his young ſtomach, and will afford a greater quantity of nutritious chyle, than any preparation which art can deviſe.

Another error no leſs prevalent, and more injurious than the former, is the idea that a woman, when nurſing, cannot eat and drink too *heartily*, as it is termed, to ſupport her own ſtrength and that of the infant. On the contrary, the tainted ſtream of intemperance muſt enfeeble

enfeeble and diſorder the child, while the nurſe really leſſens her own power of giving ſuck, and invites the attacks of a fever by her thoughtleſs indulgence. The cooling regimen before recommended muſt be ſtrictly complied with for the firſt week after delivery; and though a more liberal diet may then be allowed, yet this allowance muſt not extend to groſs meats or heating liquids. A pint of porter or ale twice a day for at leaſt a fortnight more, will be quite ſufficient, and animal food ſhould be very ſparingly uſed for a much longer period. Indeed, it would be happy for the children, as well as for their nurſes, if the latter could confine themſelves, without any painful reſtraint, to the ſalutary varieties of a milk and vegetable diet. It is a great miſtake to ſuppoſe, that a nurſe is better fitted for her office by living on animal ſubſtances: the very reverſe is the truth. The milk of women who live wholly on vegetables, is more abundant in quantity, will keep

longer, and is far ſweeter and more wholeſome than what is prepared from animal food, which, beſide its inflammatory tendency, muſt ſubject the children to gripes and worms.

Theſe remarks are merely deſigned to correct ſome vulgar errors reſpecting the quantity and quality of the aliment moſt proper for nurſes, but not to impoſe upon any woman the neceſſity of a total change from her former and uſual manner of living. I would have her continue the temperate uſe of what ſhe has found by experience to be moſt conducive to her health; and that will alſo agree beſt with her child. Her natural appetite may be ſafely indulged; but gluttony muſt be repreſſed, and a depraved taſte for ſpirituous liquors, or high-ſeaſoned food, muſt never be gratified.

It has been juſt hinted that the breaſt-milk of a woman in good health is abun-

dantly ſufficient for an infant's ſupport. Nothing elſe ſhould enter his lips for at leaſt three or four months after the birth. A little thin pap or panada may then be occaſionally introduced, with a view of familiariſing it to the child's taſte, and thereby leſſening the difficulty and danger of a complete and ſudden alteration at the time of weaning. But no ſpices, no wine, no ſugar, ſhould at any time be mixed with his food or drink. Theſe and the like contrivances of ſilly women to make an infant's ſpoon-meat what they call palatable and nouriſhing, are ſure to vitiate his natural taſte, to inflame his blood, and to fill the ſtomach with ſlime and acidities. Sugar, in particular, has another very bad effect: its frequent uſe not only gives children a diſreliſh for wholeſome ſimplicity, but entices them to ſwallow more than they otherwiſe would, or than they want, and thus makes gluttons of them even before they can be ſtrictly ſaid to eat.

Infants

Infants are commonly deprived of the breaſt too ſoon. What people call ſolid food is ſuppoſed to contribute more to their growth and health. But, in the firſt place, milk, though a fluid, is immediately converted into a ſolid ſubſtance in the ſtomach, where it is ſoon after digeſted, and then affords the beſt nutriment poſſible. It alſo appears contrary to nature to put ſolid ſubſtances into the mouth of a child, before it is furniſhed with teeth to chew them. I ſhould therefore look upon the previous cutting of the teeth as the ſureſt indication of the proper time for weaning children. I do not mean to lay this down as an invariable rule. The ſtate of the nurſe's health, as well as of the child's, ſhould be duly conſidered. It ſeems only that the cutting of the teeth gives a ſort of hint of the uſe to which they may be applied. It is farther remarkable that, during the continuance of this uſually ſharp and painful operation, children, as it were inſtinctively,

carry every thing that is put into their hands up to their mouths. Give them on ſuch occaſions cruſts of bread, pieces of biſcuit, dried fruits, or freſh liquorice-root, which they may ſuck and chew. Corals, glaſs, and the like hard bodies, are very improper, as they will either bruiſe the gums and cauſe an inflammation, or make them hard and callous by continual rubbing, ſo as to render the cutting of the teeth ſtill more difficult, and the pain more acute and laſting.

A few weeks before the intended time of weaning, that is to ſay, in the interval between the firſt ſymptoms of cutting the teeth and the appearance of at leaſt four of them, ſpoon-meat ſhould be given more frequently, and in greater quantity, reducing in the like degree the proportion of breaſt-milk, till the gradual increaſe of the one and diminution of the other render the change almoſt imperceptible. The beſt ſpoon-meat

meat that I know conſiſts of bread and milk, prepared in the manner pointed out in my Domeſtic Medicine; that is, firſt boiling the bread in water, afterwards pouring the water off, and then mixing with the bread a proper quantity of new milk unboiled. I there obſerved, that milk uſed this way was more wholeſome and nouriſhing than when boiled, and was leſs liable to occaſion coſtiveneſs.

It is not neceſſary, however, to confine children, after they are weaned, to one particular ſort of food. The bill of fare may be gradually enlarged with the child's growth, provided always that it conſiſt of an innocent variety. He may have bread and milk at one time, bread pudding at another, and bread ſliced in broth, or in the gravy of roaſt meat, diluted with water, now and then, till at length his teeth being properly grown, and fit to chew meat itſelf, he may be allowed a little of it at dinner, with a

due proportion of bread and of wholeſome vegetables. But I muſt forbid in the moſt poſitive manner any artificial ſweetening of his food, all ſpices or ſeaſoning, except ſalt, all ſorts of paſtry, butter in every form, unripe fruits, and fermented liquors.

As I have great reliance on the diſcretion of good mothers, when well informed of their duty, I ſhould be ſorry to tire them by too many details, or to fetter them by unneceſſary reſtraints; I ſhall therefore only add one caution more on this part of the ſubject, and that is, not to adopt the pernicious cuſtom of giving food or drink to children during the night. Even in the courſe of the day, they ſhould not be crammed every hour, and trained up in habits of early gluttony. Temperance is that ſure preſervative of health, which they cannot be taught to practiſe too ſoon. Let them eat freely at proper intervals; and the longer they are kept from the

the things already forbidden, the more rapidly will they thrive, and the greater number of diſeaſes will they eſcape.

As I have admitted that caſes may occur, in which it would be impoſſible or improper for a mother to ſuckle her own child, I ſhall ſuggeſt a few hints on the choice of a nurſe, and the remaining duties of the parent. From what I have ſaid of the admirable manner in which the milk of a woman newly delivered is adapted to the various wants of a child newly born, it will be eaſily inferred, that when the mother cannot diſcharge that important duty, a nurſe who has juſt lain in ought to be preferred. Otherwiſe the milk will not have the purgative qualities proper to bring away any remains of the *meconium*, nor will it be exactly ſuited to the infant's weak powers of digeſtion. Inconveniencies always ariſe the moment we oppoſe the intentions of nature. This is what obliges us to have recourſe to

the precarious aid of art. When there is a difference of more than a week in the time of delivery between the mother and the nurſe, ſome opening medicine may be neceſſary to cleanſe the firſt paſſages: A table-ſpoonful of whey or water, with the addition of a little honey or raw ſugar, will commonly anſwer the purpoſe. But the infant's ſtomach cannot be ſo eaſily reconciled to foreign ſuſtenance, or made ſtrong enough to digeſt the thick milk prepared for an older child.

On the other hand, many difficulties muſt attend the very expedient which I propoſe. It will not be eaſy, except in cities like London where there are ſeveral lying-in hoſpitals, to get nurſes newly delivered for new-born infants. Then as the nurſe cannot be removed to the child, the latter muſt be taken to the nurſe, and muſt remain with her till ſhe can go to the parent's houſe. If an exact coincidence as to the time of delivery be made the leading conſideration, an

an improper perſon may be fixed upon from that circumſtance alone, though unqualified in all other reſpects. Thus, as I before hinted, whatever courſe we take, when we deviate from nature, we ſhall find numberleſs perplexities and obſtacles in our way.

Almoſt every body is a judge of the other requiſites in a nurſe, ſuch as health, plenty of breaſt-milk, the thriving ſtate of her own child, cleanlineſs, and good temper. This laſt quality, though of very great importance, is ſeldom inquired into. Parents are commonly ſatisfied with the healthy appearance of the nurſe and her child, or with a midwife's favourable account of her milk; and ſeem to forget that a good diſpoſition is as eſſential as a good conſtitution. I do not ſay that an infant will ſuck in the vices of his nurſe; but he will certainly ſuffer from them. They are doubly injurious in ſpoiling her milk, and leſſening her tender care of the child

that

that is at her mercy. The twin founders of the Roman empire were ſaid to have been ſuckled by a ſhe-wolf; I ſhould think it much more unlikely that an infant could be properly nurſed by a paſſionate or ill-tempered woman.

The mother is not to ſuppoſe herſelf relieved from all trouble by the choice of even a good nurſe. The latter may give the child the breaſt; but ſhe ſhould be directed and zealouſly aſſiſted by the former in the diſcharge of every other duty. This will render her labour eaſy, and her ſituation comfortable. She ſhould alſo have every indulgence conſiſtent with good ſenſe and with the rules before laid down. She ſhould not be debarred from the occaſional company of her huſband: a rigorous chaſtity, or a total abſtinence from wedded joys, is often as hurtful to the nurſe and child as immoderate gratification. It is by humouring her that you will engage her to

to humour you in the ſtrict obſervance of all your reaſonable injunctions.

The child's father alſo ſhould pay very aſſiduous attention to the proper treatment of his offspring. His advice, his encouragement, his ſuperintending care, will have the happieſt effect. Is not our admiration of CATO's character increaſed, when we read in PLUTARCH, that the man, who governed in Rome with ſo much glory, would quit every buſineſs in order to be preſent when the nurſe waſhed and rubbed his child? Such inſtances are ſeldom to be met with in our times; we think ourſelves far above all the trifling concerns of the nurſery. Yet, according to the remark I made on the ſame ſubject in another work, it is not ſo with the kennel or the ſtables: people of the firſt rank are not aſhamed to viſit theſe places, and to ſee their orders for the management of their dogs and their horſes obeyed; though any of thoſe ſportſmen would

bluſh

bluſh were he ſurpriſed in performing the ſame office for that being who derived its exiſtence from himſelf, who is the heir of his fortunes, and the future hope of his country.

If CATO's wiſdom and parental affection could be heightened by contraſt, I might eaſily point to a noble duke who is more attentive to the breed of dogs than to that of the human ſpecies, and who has laid out more money upon the magnificence of a kennel, than he ever expended for the relief of poverty. I am told, that his grace is very particular in the choice of ſkilful nurſes to wait upon the females of his canine family, when they are ſick, or *in the ſtraw*. I do not blame his tenderneſs for brute animals; but I am ſorry it ſhould be confined to them, when a more natural ſphere lies open for the exerciſe of his humanity. This hint will be taken by thoſe for whom it is intended; *qui facit ille capit*.

SECTION VI.

Of Exercise and Rest during Infancy.

I MADE use of the plainest reasoning I could in the first Chapter of my "Domestic Medicine," to shew how much the health, the growth, and the strength of children, depended on exercise; and to warn parents of the melancholy effects of inaction, and of sedentary employments in early life. It does not appear to me that any new arguments on that subject are necessary; but it may be of service to mothers and nurses to be informed how the principles there laid down should be reduced to practice during infancy. They are otherwise apt to fall into great errors, not considering that as much mischief may often arise from untimely and violent exercise, as from the neglect of it when most essential.

It

It has been juſtly obſerved, that children require no exerciſe for the firſt and ſecond months after their birth, but a gentle motion ſomewhat like that to which they had been accuſtomed in the mother's womb. A frequent change of poſture, however, is adviſable, leſt by always laying them on the ſame ſide, or carrying them on the ſame arm, their ſoft limbs may be moulded into an improper ſhape. But violent agitations of any ſort may do them much greater injury, by deranging the fine ſtructure of the brain, and giving riſe to the incurable evils of intellectual or nervous weakneſs.

Other parts of the body, as well as the brain, are expoſed to great danger by toſſing infants on high, or rapidly *dancing them*, as it is called, before their little limbs have gained ſome degree of firmneſs. A great deal of the ſpine is griſtly, and the breaſt entirely ſo. Conſider then what may be the effect

effect of the grafp or ftrong preffure of your hands againft thofe places, in order to prevent the child from falling. As he advances in age, his bones acquire folidity, and his whole body becomes able to endure a little fhock. Brifk, lively, and frequent exercife, will then be of the greateft fervice to him; and you run no rifk of laying the foundations of any difeafe, or of deftroying any part of that admirable fymmetry in the human frame on which health and beauty alike depend.

In the courfe of a few months, a well-nurfed child, unfettered by any check on the free motion of his limbs, will be able to exercife himfelf, and to gather ftrength from every new effort. When you take him into the fields, which you fhould do every day in fine weather, let him roll upon the dry grafs; and, when in the nurfery, upon the carpet. He will foon learn the ufe of his legs, without the leaft poffibility of making them

crooked by the preſſure of ſo light a body. When he begins to walk, you muſt help him a little in his firſt experiments: lead him about with the ſupport of your hands, and then by the finger only, till you perceive he can do without your aſſiſtance. Go-carts and leading-ſtrings not only retard the increaſe of a child's activity, and produce an aukwardneſs of gait very hard to be corrected afterwards, but often affect the cheſt, lungs, and bowels, in ſuch a manner as to pave the way for habitual indigeſtion or coſtiveneſs, and for aſthmatic or conſumptive complaints.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the numberleſs contrivances of mothers to teach their children to walk, as if it was a thing to be learned by their inſtruction; and to keep them propped up by wooden machines, or ſuſpended by back-ſtrings, as if their lives and limbs were to be endangered by the leaſt tumble. They are too near the ground and too

too light to hurt themſelves by falling. Beſides, the oftener they fall, the ſooner they will learn, when down, to get up again; and the only way to make them ſure-footed, is to accuſtom them betimes to truſt more to the proper management of their own legs, than to any artificial ſupport.

As to the beſt time for exerciſe during infancy, it admits of a very ſimple regulation. That ſort of paſſive exerciſe, which conſiſts of agreeable motion in a nurſe's arms, muſt never be omitted after the uſe of the bath in the morning, and cannot be too often repeated in the courſe of the day. But when the child is able to take exerciſe himſelf, it will be eaſy to manage matters ſo as to let him have as much as he likes before meals, and never to rouze him into action upon a full ſtomach. If left to himſelf, or to nature, he will then be more inclined to ſtillneſs and repoſe.

The ſubject of reſt requires ſome farther conſideration. A healthy, thriving child ſleeps more than two-thirds of his time for a few weeks after his birth. So ſtrong a propenſity muſt be indulged by day as well as by night; but, with judicious management, he will be gradually brought to want and to enjoy repoſe by night only. This is evidently the order of nature; and ſuch a habit, begun in childhood, and continued through life, will contribute more to its enjoyment and duration, than any one maxim or rule of health ever yet laid down by human wiſdom.

Nurſes, indeed, are too apt, for their own caſe, or to gain time for other concerns, to cheriſh the ſleepy diſpoſition of infants, and to increaſe it by various things of a ſtupefactive quality. All theſe are extremely pernicious. I would not ſuffer opiates, under the name of cordials or carminatives, or in any ſhape or form whatever, to be given to a child

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in health. The only compoſing means, which art may at any time be allowed to employ, are gentle motion and ſoft lullabies. I very much approve of the little *cots* now in faſhion, which, being ſuſpended by cords, are eaſily moved from ſide to ſide, and promote the deſired end, without the danger which violent *rocking* was often attended with. Thoſe ſwinging cots are in exact conformity to the ſuggeſtions of the beſt medical writers, ancient and modern. GALEN mentions the propriety of placeing children to ſleep in *lectulis pendentibus*, or *hanging little beds;* and the reaſon for ſuch a contrivance is thus explained, with great clearneſs and ſimplicity, by VAN SWIETEN:

"As the *fœtus*," ſays this accurate obſerver of nature, "hanging from the navel-ſtring in the womb, is eaſily ſhaken this way and that, while the mother moves her body; hence it has been reaſonably preſumed, that new-born in-

fants delight in ſuch a vibrating motion. They have therefore been laid in cradles, that they might enjoy this gentle exerciſe, and be more and more ſtrengthened. Daily experience teaches us, that the worſt-tempered children are ſoothed by this motion, and at laſt ſink into a ſweet ſleep. But the ſhaking of the cradle ſhould be gentle and uniform; on which account, *thoſe cradles that hang by cords are the beſt of all*, as they may by a ſlight force be moved equably, and without any noiſe. At the ſame time, the motion communicated to theſe cradles is imperceptibly diminiſhed, and at laſt ceaſes without any ſhock."

In England, as well as in moſt other parts of Europe, cradles fixed upon wooden *rockers*, have been in uſe from time immemorial. No evil could ariſe from their continuance, while in the hands of careful and affectionate mothers; but, when left to the management of impatient nurſes, or of giddy boys

boys and girls, the delicate texture of an infant's brain would often be expoſed to great danger. The agitation of a cradle by ſuch perſons has been compared to the jolting of a ſtage-coach baſket; and I believe that a poor child would ſuffer as much from the one as from the other, were he not a little more confined in the former. Is it poſſible to conceive a more ſhocking object than an ill-tempered nurſe, who, inſtead of ſoothing the accidental uneaſineſs or indiſpoſition to ſleep of her baby, when laid down to reſt, is often worked up to the higheſt pitch of rage; and, in the exceſs of her folly and brutality, endeavours, by loud, harſh threats, and the impetuous rattle of the cradle, to drown the infant's cries, and to force him into ſlumber!—She may ſometimes gain her point, but never till the poor victim's ſtrength is exhauſted.

To guard againſt this evil, the tranſition from rocking cradles to fixed bedſteads was not neceſſary. The gentle motion before deſcribed, at once ſo natural and ſo pleaſing to infants, may be given them with eaſe and ſafety in little baſkets ſuſpended by cords, as uſed in the Highlands of Scotland under the name of *creels*, or in the more elegant contrivances of *ſwinging cots*, which are now coming into faſhion. I am ſorry to ſee any of the latter ſurrounded with cloſe curtains, which have almoſt as bad an effect as confining the infant in a room of the ſame dimenſions. One green curtain may be hung at ſome diſtance from his face, ſo as to intercept the light in the daytime but not to obſtruct the free communication of air, or to reverberate the exhalations from his lungs and body. Green window-blinds in the ſleeping-room will anſwer the ſame purpoſe. Care ſhould alſo be taken not to ex-

poſe infants either in bed or out of bed to an oblique light, or they will become ſquint-eyed. They ſhould be kept facing it, when up, and exactly the reverſe, when laid down to reſt. If the light come upon them from one ſide, their eyes will take that direction, and thus they will get the habit of looking croſſways.

It is of ſtill greater moment to pay ſtrict attention to their bedding. Nothing can have a more relaxing tendency, or be at the ſame time more unfavourable to cleanlineſs, than beds and pillows ſtuffed with feathers. Theſe abſorb and retain the perſpirable matter, as well as every other impurity, ſo that the child who ſleeps upon them muſt inhale the moſt noxious vapour, while its action on the ſurface of his body muſt deſtroy the energy of the ſkin, and render his whole frame, both within and without, the ready receiver of diſeaſe. Horſe-hair cuſhions and mat-

treſſes are far preferable; but if ſoft bran were uſed inſtead of hair for the ſtuffing of children's beds and pillows, theſe would more readily let any moiſture paſs through them, would never be too much heated, and might be frequently changed or renewed without any great trouble or expence. My former hints concerning a child's dreſs are equally applicable to his bed-clothes, which ſhould be looſe, eaſy, and as light as may be conſiſtent with due warmth. I ſay the leſs on the ſubject of cold, as moſt mothers are too apt to run into the oppoſite extreme.

CHAP. V.

OF DWARFISHNESS AND DEFORMITY.

THE chief cauſes of defects in the ſize and form of children, have been occaſionally touched upon in the preceding chapters; but the prevalence of ſuch evils, and the lamentable conſequences with which they are followed, require to be more fully and diſtinctly conſidered. I muſt not weaken the influence of important truths, by ſuppreſſing any part of them, or by leaving them too widely ſcattered. I muſt ſhake off the reſtraints of falſe delicacy, and, by candidly pointing out the grand ſource of ſo many private and public calamities, endeavour to prevail on parents to adopt the moſt effectual remedy. Let not the faireſt part of the creation be offended with me for ſaying, that, in all caſes of dwarfiſh-

dwarfiſhneſs and deformity, ninety-nine out of a hundred are owing to the folly, miſconduct, or neglect of mothers. The following remarks are not written in the ſpirit of reproach, but with a view to the moſt deſirable reform.

It would be difficult to mention any thing in which ſociety is ſo deeply intereſted, as in the proper union of the ſexes. This has often engaged the attention of legiſlators, and marriages have been prohibited in various diſeaſes and perſonal diſqualifications. We have even an inſtance upon record, where the community interpoſed, when degeneracy in the royal line was likely to be the conſequence of their king's injudicious choice of a wife. Hiſtory tells us, that the Lacedæmonians condemned their king Archidamus for having married a weak, puny woman; "becauſe," ſaid they, "inſtead of propagating a race of heroes, you will fill the throne with a progeny of changelings."

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I am aware that any checks on the liberty of individuals in their matrimonial contracts, would be deemed inconſiſtent with the freedom of the Britiſh conſtitution; and, indeed, it is ſtrange that laws ſhould be neceſſary to convince men, that health and form are, or ought to be, powerful conſiderations in the choice of a wife. Every part of animated nature proclaims aloud, that *like begets like;* and though a puny, dwarfiſh, or diſtorted woman, may become a mother, it will often be at the riſk of her own life, and always with a certainty of tranſmitting ſome of her infirmities to her innocent and ill-fated offspring.

But the inheritance of parental weakneſs and deformity is one of thoſe curſes which argument or expoſtulation cannot avert. The voice of reaſon is diſregarded, and objects of natural deſire are overlooked, by avarice and pride. I ſhall therefore confine my obſervations to

to ſuch evils as may be preſumed to admit of a cure, becauſe they ariſe rather from error and folly, than from depravity or wilful perverſeneſs.

It ſeems to be the natural wiſh of every pregnant woman to bring forth ſtout, healthy, and beautiful infants. Yet Mr. LOCKE did not heſitate to aſſert, that, if mothers had the formation of their own children in the womb, we ſhould ſee nothing any where but deformity. The *fœtus* is happily placed in better hands, and under the guardian care of nature. But though it cannot be new-moulded, altered in its ſhape, or disfigured by the mere fancies and capricious deſires of the mother, it may ſuffer no leſs injury from her ignorance, her folly, or miſconduct. I hope I made it ſufficiently evident in my cautions to women during pregnancy, that the *fœtus* may not only be checked in its growth, but marked alſo and diſtorted by tight or heavy preſſure on the womb,

womb,—by ſtays, girdles, or the like improper ligatures. In vain does nature provide for the eaſy and gradual enlargement of the embryo, if her benignant purpoſes are counteracted by the bracing reſtraints of a ſilly mother's dreſs.

After the birth, as I before obſerved, ſtill greater danger awaits the infant from attempts to mend his ſhape,—to keep his head and limbs in proper form,—and to ſecure him againſt accidents. The worſt accident that can befal him is far leſs alarming than the certain conſequences of ſuch preſumptuous improvements and ill-directed care. He becomes puny, ſtunted, deformed, diſeaſed; and, though perhaps caſt "in nature's happieſt mould," is ſure to be ſpoiled by the disfiguring touch of man.

I have already explained the fatal effects of meddling with the ſoft bones of an infant's ſkull at the birth; of confin-

ing them by any check; or covering them too warmly. I ſhewed how wonderfully the pliancy of thoſe bones was contrived to yield to obſtructions, for the purpoſe of promoting eaſy and ſafe delivery, and afterwards to reſume of themſelves their proper place and form, if they had been ſqueezed together in the act of parturition. I alſo inſiſted on the importance of a thin and light cap, that the air may act upon them freely, to render them hard and compact, and of courſe fitter to defend the brain from cold or any external injury. But while midwives and nurſes are ſuffered to purſue a contrary plan, we need not wonder at meeting with ſo many inſtances of early convulſions, of idiotiſm, and of heads miſſhapen, infirm, or ſuſceptible of cold upon expoſure to the leaſt breath of air.

I was no leſs earneſt in my cautions againſt the uſe of bandages, or of oppreſſive covering for any other part of the

the tender frame. I did not magnify the danger, but ſimply ſtated the reſult of frequent obſervation. I never knew a ſingle inſtance of a child's attainment to full ſize and vigour, after having been cruelly confined during infancy in ſwathes and ſwaddling-clothes. How, indeed, is it poſſible, when the action of the heart, the lungs, the arteries, and of all the vital organs, is cramped and enfeebled;—when the free circulation of the blood and ſecretion of the humours are prevented;—and when the impatience of reſtraint urges the infant to waſte all his ſtrength in continual but unavailing efforts to burſt his fetters.

As I knew that external objects were more likely to make ſome impreſſion on the minds of my female readers, than arguments drawn from the ſtructure of the human frame, I endeavoured to fix their attention firſt on the young of brute animals, many of which, as kittens, puppies,

puppies, &c. though very delicate when brought into the world, never want to be ſtrengthened, kept in due form, or preſerved from accidents, by means of ſwaddling-bands. Children have as little occaſion for any ſuch defence againſt danger. In reply to the idle objections of mothers and nurſes, founded on the difference in point of alertneſs between kittens and infants, it has been admitted, that the latter are certainly heavier than the former, but they are more feeble in the ſame proportion: they are incapable of moving with ſufficient force to hurt themſelves; and if their limbs get into a wrong ſituation, the uneaſineſs they feel ſoon induces them to change it. Is it not abſurd to put them to real pain by galling ligatures, for fear of imaginary bruiſes; and to diſtort their tender bodies effectually by ſqueezing them into a preſs, leſt they ſhould grow diſtorted from being left at liberty to ſtir?

While

While I was writing on this part of the ſubject laſt autumn, I could not help being ſtruck with another illuſtration of it, which preſented itſelf every day to my view. Above three hundred cattle were grazing in a field before my window, all of them nearly of the ſame ſize, well-formed and vigorous, without the leaſt mark of feebleneſs or diſtortion. They had not been kept panting, when young, in tight and cumberſome wrappers, nor had they been ſtunted in their growth by improper management. They might be truly called the offspring of nature, reared and brought up in conformity to her laws. How painful and humiliating did I feel the contraſt, when I compared them with the foſter-children of art,—with bipeds of various ſhapes and ſizes,—with the hunch-backed, crooked-legged, lame, ricketty, diminutive, and deformed human beings, whom I often ſaw walking through the ſame field!

Should it be alleged, that inferences drawn from a ſpecies ſo different from our own are not concluſive, let us next turn our eyes to what takes place in ſavage nations, who are all known to be tall, robuſt, and well-proportioned. Indeed, any inſtance to the contrary is ſo very rare and extraordinary among them, that it was vulgarly believed they put all their puny and miſ-ſhapen children to death. The fact is, that they have not any ſuch, becauſe they never thwart the purpoſes of nature, or diſobey her dictates in the treatment of their infant progeny.

The perfect form of the North American ſavages will be more clearly conceived from the following anecdote of the late preſident of the Royal Academy, than from a whole volume of travels. This juſtly admired painter, who is a native of America, having diſplayed in his youth ſtrong proofs of uncommon talents, was ſent to Italy, at that

that time the grand ſchool for the imitative arts. Upon his firſt ſeeing the *Apollo Belvidere*, he is ſaid to have exclaimed, "Oh! what a fine *Mohawk* Indian!" Almoſt every body has at leaſt heard, that the *Apollo Belvidere* is one of the moſt beautiful and exquiſite pieces of ſtatuary in the world.

I muſt not here omit BUFFON's account of the method of bringing up their young purſued by other unpoliſhed nations, as we proudly call them. "The ancient Peruvians," ſays he, "in looſely ſwathing their children, left their arms at full liberty. When they threw aſide this dreſs, they placed them at freedom in a little hollow, dug in the earth, and lined with clothes. Here their children, unable to get out and crawl into danger, had their arms quite looſe, and could move their heads and bend their bodies, without the riſk of falling or hurting themſelves. As ſoon as they were able to ſtand, the nipple

was ſhewn them at a diſtance, and thus they were enticed to learn to walk."

The ſame writer obſerves, "that the young negroes are often in a ſituation in which it is with more difficulty they come at the breaſt. They cling round the hip of the mother with their knees and feet, and by that means ſtick ſo cloſe, that they ſtand in no need of being ſupported, while they reach the breaſt with their hands, and thus continue to ſuck, without letting go their hold, or being in any danger of falling, notwithſtanding the various motions of the mother, who all the while is employed in her uſual labour. Theſe children begin to walk at the end of the ſecond month, or rather to ſhuffle along on their hands and knees; an exerciſe that gives them ever afterwards a facility of running almoſt as ſwift in that manner as on their feet."

To this very intereſting deſcription, I can add, upon the teſtimony of a friend of

of mine who had been ſeveral years on the coaſt of Africa, that the natives neither put any clothes on their children, nor apply to their bodies bandages of any kind, but lay them on a pallet, and ſuffer them to tumble about at pleaſure. Yet they are all ſtraight, and ſeldom have any complaint. Good health, as well as a good ſhape, is the conſequence of their free, unconfined motion during infancy: while, among us, on the contrary, reſtraint, or, what is the ſame thing, tight preſſure, checks growth, diſtorts the frame, and renders it at once diminutive, unſightly, and infirm. There is always a cloſe and very natural connection between deformity, weakneſs, and diſeaſe.

The more we enlarge our ſurvey of the human ſpecies in various parts of the world, the leſs doubt ſhall we entertain of the principal cauſe of dwarfiſhneſs and deformity. We ſhall find that mankind are ſtunted and diſtorted in

proportion to their degree of civilization;—that people who go almoſt naked from their birth, and live in a ſtate of nature, are well-ſhaped, ſtrong, and healthy;—and that among others who boaſt of higher refinements, the greater attention is paid to dreſs, the nearer are the approaches to the ſtature and to the weakneſs of pygmies.

STERNE, who knew ſo well how to enliven the moſt ſerious ſubjects, repreſents himſelf as ſtruck with the number of dwarfs he ſaw at Paris.

I am very ſorry to obſerve, that we need not go ſo far as Paris to be convinced of the lamentable effects of tight clothes, bad nurſing, and confined impure air. Many of theſe matters are not much better ordered in the Engliſh metropolis: every narrow lane in London ſwarms with ricketty children; and though we cannot ſay of the people whom

whom we meet with in the ſtreets, that every third man is a pigmy, yet we may with ſtrict truth aſſert, that many of the women are evidently ſtunted in their growth, and, both in ſize and robuſtneſs, are below the ſtandard of mediocrity. With regard to females, indeed, born and bred in this city, as more attention is unfortunately paid to the tightneſs of their dreſs, and to the artificial moulding or pretended improvement of their ſhape when young, the far greater part of them muſt be of a diminutive ſtature, and numbers are diſtorted either in body or limbs.

CHAP. VI.

BANEFUL EFFECTS OF PARENTAL TENDERNESS, OR OF WHAT MAY BE CALLED AN EXTREMELY DELICATE AND ENERVATING EDUCATION.

HAVING repeatedly taken occaſion to point out the evils that muſt ariſe from the inattention of mothers to any part of their duty, and eſpecially from abandoning their children to the management of hired nurſes, I ſhall now proceed to explain the bad conſequences of the oppoſite extreme. Too much care operates in the ſame manner as too little, and produces ſimilar effects. A caſe or two, ſelected from many which have occurred to me in the courſe of practice, will ſufficiently illuſtrate the truth of this aſſertion.

The grand rule of life, which reaſon and experience concur to recommend,

is always to purſue the *golden mean;* to ſteer a middle courſe between dangerous extremes; and to take care, in avoiding any one vice or folly, not to run into its oppoſite. Mothers are too apt to forget this admirable leſſon, in nurſing and rearing their children. They do not ſeem to know the proper medium between cruel neglect or indifference on the one hand, and the fatal exceſſes of anxiety and fondneſs on the other. In giving way to the ſtrong impulſes of natural affection, they commonly go too far, and do as much miſchief to their offspring by miſguided tenderneſs, as by total inſenſibility.

It is not my intention to combat thoſe fine feelings of mothers, without which the human race would ſoon be extinct. I only wiſh to ſee them kept a little more under the control of reaſon. I wiſh to ſee the moſt amiable of all paſſions, maternal love, diſplayed in promoting the health and fortifying the con-

conſtitutions of children,—not in relaxing them by every ſpecies of ſoftneſs and effeminacy. When this paſſion is carried beyond the proper bounds, it ceaſes to be love: it becomes a ſort of blind infatuation, always injures, and often deſtroys the object of its regard. Mothers ſhould never forget the fable of the monkey ſnatching up one of its young in a moment of alarm, and, in order to ſave it from danger, ſqueezing it with ſo cloſe an embrace as to occaſion its death. What a juſt picture of darling children ſo frequently *killed by kindneſs!*

Nature provides for the helpleſs ſtate of infancy in the ſtrong attachment of parents. A child comes into the world, chiefly dependent on the mother's care for the preſervation of its being. She is tremblingly alive to all its wants. Every tender office ſhe performs increaſes her fond ſolicitude, till at length it gains the full poſſeſſion of her affections, and her ſole

ſole wiſh is to make it happy. What a lamentable thing it is that ſhe ſhould ſo frequently miſtake the means!

Indeed there cannot be a greater miſtake than to imagine that extreme tenderneſs or delicacy of treatment will promote the health, the growth, the preſent or the future happineſs of a child. It muſt have quite a contrary effect. Inſtead of ſupplying the real calls of nature, it creates a thouſand artificial wants: inſtead of guarding the infant from pain and diſeaſe, it renders him much more ſuſceptible of both, and leſs capable of enduring either: inſtead of happineſs, it enſures miſery in every ſtage of his exiſtence, as the infirmities of body and mind, which are contracted in the cradle, will follow him with incurable obſtinacy to the grave.

The writer, whom I quoted on the ſubject of ſuckling, is no leſs forcible in his cenſure of maternal fondneſs. He ſays,

ſays, the obvious paths of nature are alike forſaken by the woman who gives up the care of her infant to a hireling, or, in other words, who neglects the duties of a mother; and by her who carries theſe duties to exceſs,—" who makes an idol of her child; increaſes his weakneſs, by preventing his ſenſe of it; and, as if ſhe could emancipate him from the laws of nature, hinders every approach of pain or diſtreſs; without thinking that, for the ſake of preſerving him at preſent from a few trifling inconveniencies, ſhe is accumulating on his head a diſtant load of anxieties and misfortunes;—without thinking, that it is a barbarous precaution to enervate and indulge the child at the expence of the man."

He then begs of mothers to attend to nature, and follow the track ſhe has delineated:—" ſhe continually exerciſes her children, and fortifies their conſtitution by experiments of every kind; inuring

inuring them betimes to grief and pain. In cutting their teeth, they experience the fever; griping colics throw them into convulſions; the hooping-cough ſuffocates, and worms torment them; ſurfeits corrupt their blood; and the various fermentations to which their humours are ſubject, cover them with troubleſome eruptions: almoſt the whole period of childhood is ſickneſs and danger. But, in paſſing through this courſe of experiments, the child gathers ſtrength and fortitude; and, as ſoon as he is capable of living, the principles of life become leſs precarious.

"This," he adds, "is the law of nature. Why ſhould you act contrary to it? Do you not ſee that, by endeavouring to correct her work, you ſpoil it, and prevent the execution of her deſigns? Act you from without, as ſhe does within. This, according to you, would increaſe the danger: on the contrary,

trary, it will create a diverſion, and leſſen it. Experience ſhews, that children delicately educated die in a greater proportion than others. Provided you do not make them exert themſelves beyond their powers, leſs riſk is run in exerciſing, than indulging them in eaſe. Inure them therefore by degrees to thoſe inconveniencies which they muſt one day ſuffer. Harden their bodies to the intemperature of the ſeaſons, climates, and elements;—to hunger, thirſt, and fatigue."

As the philoſopher was aware that the latter part of his advice would ſtir up all the fears and alarms of fond mothers, he takes ſome pains to convince them that it may be followed with perfect ſafety. He very juſtly obſerves, that, "before the body has acquired a ſettled habit, we may give it any we pleaſe, without danger; though, when it is once arrived at full growth and conſiſtence, every alteration is hazardous. A

child will bear thoſe viciſſitudes, which to a man would be inſupportable. The ſoft and pliant fibres of the former readily yield to impreſſion: thoſe of the latter are more rigid, and are reduced only by violence to recede from the forms they have aſſumed. We may therefore," he concludes, "bring up a child robuſt and hearty, without endangering either its life or health; and though even ſome riſk were run in this reſpect, it would not afford ſufficient cauſe of heſitation. Since they are riſks inſeparable from human life, can we do better, than to run them during that period of it wherein we take them at the leaſt diſadvantage?"—I leave this queſtion to be duly conſidered by every mother who is not blind to the cleareſt evidence of truth, or wilfully deaf to the moſt commanding tones of eloquence and argument.

The familiarity of any object leſſens our ſurpriſe at it, or there are few inſtances

ſtances of human folly which would aſtoniſh us more, than that of a fond mother, who, in order to protect her child from a little pain or uneaſineſs while he is young, multiplies his ſufferings when he comes to maturity. Strange infatuation! to ſacrifice the man to the infant, and, through over-ſolicitude for a year or two after his entrance into life, to ſhorten its natural extent, and to fill up that contracted ſpan of exiſtence with weakneſs, irritability, and diſeaſe! Did any body ever think of rearing an oak plant in a hot-houſe, thence to be removed to the bleak mountain? And is the puny, enervated nurſling better prepared to endure the tranſition from the lap of ſoftneſs to all the accidents of a rugged and a ſtormy world?

As ſtrong examples often make ſome impreſſion where other modes of reaſoning fail, I ſhall here beg leave to introduce the hiſtory of a young gentleman, whom I attended at a very early period of

of my practice, and who fell a victim to the exceſſive fondneſs of an indulgent mother. With every wiſh to promote her ſon's health and happineſs, ſhe was, as far as reſpected intention, the *innocent* but abſolute cauſe of totally deſtroying both. She brought on relaxation and debility, by her miſguided endeavours to avert pain; and while ſhe hoped to prolong the life of an only ſon, the means which ſhe made uſe of for that purpoſe, not only abridged its duration, but precluded his power of enjoying it. Though he was buried at the age of twenty-one, he might be ſaid to have died in his cradle; for life has been well defined, not to conſiſt in merely breathing,—but in making a proper uſe of our organs, our ſenſes, our faculties, and of all thoſe parts of the human frame which contribute to the conſciouſneſs of our exiſtence. That he never attained to this ſtate of being, will fully appear from the following narrative.

EDWARD WATKINSON was the only ſon of a country clergyman, of amiable manners and ſound learning, but of a recluſe turn of mind. The mother was the daughter of a London tradeſman, and had been educated with extreme delicacy. She naturally purſued the ſame line of conduct towards her own child; and her fond huſband was too much under the influence of the like fatal weakneſs. Many a child is ſpoiled by the indulgence of one parent: in the caſe now before us, both concurred to produce that enervating effect.

For ſome time after his birth, maſter NEDDY was reckoned a promiſing boy. When I firſt ſaw him, he was about eighteen years of age; but, to judge by his look, one would have ſuppoſed him to be at leaſt eighty. His face was long, pale, and deeply furrowed with wrinkles—his eyes were ſunk in their ſockets—his teeth quite decayed—his noſe and chin almoſt touched each other—his

breaſt narrow and prominent—his body twiſted—his legs like ſpindles—his hands and fingers approaching nearly to the form of a bird's claws—in ſhort, his whole figure exhibited the truly pitiable appearance of a very old man, ſinking under the weight of years and infirmities into the grave.

It was at Midſummer I paid my firſt viſit. I then found him wrapped up in clothing ſufficient for the rigours of a Lapland winter, and ſo cloſely muffled that one could hardly ſee the tip of his noſe. He wore ſeveral pair of ſtockings: his gloves were double, and reached his elbows; and, to complete the abſurdity of his dreſs, he was tightly laced in ſtays. Though armed in this manner at all points, he ſeldom peeped out of doors except in the dog-days, and then ventured no farther than the church, which was only forty paces from his father's houſe. I believe this was the moſt diſtant excurſion he ever made; and the

extraordinary attempt was always accompanied with peculiar care, and many additional preſervatives from cold.

The eye of his parents might be truly ſaid to watch over him not only by day, but by night alſo, as he ſlept in the ſame bed with them, having never been permitted to lie alone, leſt he ſhould throw the clothes off, or feel the want of any immediate aſſiſtance. It did not once occur to his father or mother, that all the inconveniencies which they ſo much dreaded, could not be half ſo injurious as the relaxing atmoſphere of a warm bed, ſurrounded by cloſe curtains, and impregnated with the noxious effluvia from their lungs and bodies.

His food and his drink were of the weakeſt quality, always adminiſtered warm, and by weight and meaſure. When I recommended a more nouriſhing diet, and a little generous wine, I was told that the ſtrongeſt thing maſter

NEDDY

NEDDY had ever taken was *chicken water*, and that they durſt not venture on wine or animal food for fear of a fever. Thus was the poor lad reduced almoſt to a ſkeleton, through the ſilly apprehenſion of a diſeaſe, of which he was not ſuſceptible. Nature was in him too weak to ſpread a hectic flufh even for a moment over his countenance, which had acquired the colour of a parboiled chicken. All his vital powers were languid; and even his ſpeech reſembled the ſqueaking of a bird, more than the voice of a man.

When I ſpoke of exerciſe, I was told he took a walk every fine day in the hall, and that was deemed ſufficient for one of his delicate conſtitution. I mentioned a horſe—the mother was frightened at the very name of ſo dangerous an animal. On telling her, that I owed the firmneſs and vigour of my own conſtitution to riding every day, ſhe began to think there might be ſome-

thing ſpecific in it; and ſhe therefore conſented to the purchaſe of a little horſe. But tame as the creature was, it did not quiet the mother's alarms. Maſter NEDDY, though placed upon the poney's back, was not entruſted with the reins. Theſe were given in charge to a maid-ſervant, who led the horſe round the orchard, while the cautious rider faſtened both hands on the pommel of the ſaddle; and the father walking on one ſide, and the mother on the other, held him faſt by the legs, leſt he might be brought to the ground by any ſudden ſtart of his high-mettled racer. This exhibition was too ridiculous not to excite the laughter of the neighbours, which ſoon put an end to maſter NEDDY's equeſtrian exerciſe.

The timidity of a youth thus brought up is more eaſily conceived than deſcribed. Fearful of every thing, he would run from the moſt inoffenſive animal, as if he had been purſued by a lion or a tiger.

a tiger. His weakneſs in this reſpect being known to the village boys, it was a common practice with them, whenever they ſaw him peeping through his father's gate, to frighten him into the houſe by calling to the pigs to bite him. This ſportive alarm had the ſame effect as the ſudden ruſh of a mad bullock.

With ſuch exceſſive weakneſs both of mind and body, maſter NEDDY had ſome good points about him. His parents repreſented him as a perfect model of morality; and I had no right to doubt the truth of their repreſentation, though I did not give him quite ſo much credit on that ſcore, becauſe he did not poſſeſs ſufficient force of conſtitution to be capable of any kind of vice. But I viewed, with mixed emotions of admiration and pity, ſome proofs of learning and abilities which he left behind him. I was the more ſurpriſed, as the inceſſant care beſtowed on his perſon ſeemed

to leave very little time for any mental acquirements.

Improper food, tight or oppreſſive clothing, and want of freſh air and exerciſe, have in their turn proved deſtructive to thouſands. This young man fell a victim to them all; and it would have been a miracle indeed, had he ſurvived their combined influence. He died without a groan, or any mark of diſeaſe except premature old age, the machine being fairly worn out before he completed his twenty-firſt year. His death proved fatal to both his parents, whoſe lives were cloſely *bound up in that of the lad.*

The father had perceived his own error, but not before it was too late. On reading my inaugural diſſertation, which was then publiſhed in Latin, under the title already mentioned, he ſent for me, and begged I would endeavour to ſave his ſon. The youth, alas! was far

beyond the reach of my moſt zealous efforts: I could only witneſs the certainty of his fate. Medicine was of as little uſe to him, as conſolation to his afflicted parents. The bitterneſs of their grief was increaſed by ſelf-reproach; and friendſhip exerted her ſoothing voice in vain. The father on his death-bed conjured me to tranſlate my diſſertation into Engliſh, as he thought it might be of infinite ſervice to mankind. My compliance with his requeſt gave riſe to the "Domeſtic Medicine," of which that eſſay on the means of preſerving the lives of children, conſtitutes the firſt, and, in my opinion, the beſt chapter.

The above relation may to ſome appear romantic; but did I ſuppoſe any one capable of queſtioning my veracity, I could name ſeveral perſons of the firſt reſpectability, who know, that, ſo far from its being heightened, it falls ſhort of the truth. Indeed I might go farther,

ther, and affert, from my own too frequent obfervation, that a maſter NEDDY is not ſo ſingular a phenomenon in many other families, and that the evils of parental folly are much oftener entailed upon favourite heirs, than the power of fully enjoying the eſtates which deſcend to them.

But it is in the female world, more eſpecially, that maternal fondneſs ſpreads its fatal ravages. Girls remain longer than boys under the immediate and almoſt excluſive care of their mothers; and when the latter are more guided by love than reaſon, by the impulſes of a tender heart inſtead of the dictates of an enlightened mind, the former are doomed to weakneſs and miſery. I ſhall not offend my fair readers by a repetition of the remarks already made on the acquired defects and infirmities of too many of our young women; nor ſhall I attempt to deſcribe the long train and almoſt endleſs variety of nervous diſeaſes, from

from which ſo few of them are exempt: I ſhall now confine myſelf to a ſingle inſtance of the effects of extreme delicacy in the education of a daughter, as the counterpart of my ſtory of a ſon cut off by the like means.

Isabella Wilson was in early life a very promiſing child, and the object of her mother's idolatry. This good woman had no idea that health and beauty were more likely to be deſtroyed than improved or preſerved by exceſſive care. In the choice of diet, clothes, exerciſe, &c. the delicacy of her ſweet girl was always the ruling idea. It is eaſy, indeed, to render the human frame more delicate; but to make it more robuſt, requires a very different mode of proceeding. As the child did not ſeem afflicted with any particular complaint, the doting mother exulted at the happy effects of her own management, and never thought that the taper form, the fine limbs, and the languiſhing ſoftneſs, which

which ſhe ſo much admired, were the ſure ſymptoms of debility and of latent diſeaſe.

ISABELLA's mental improvement, in which ſhe ſurpaſſed many other young girls of her age at the ſame ſchool, was no leſs flattering to her miſtaken parents. But ſhe had ſcarcely attained her fourteenth year before the fond illuſion vaniſhed, and the regular functions of both mind and body were ſuſpended by a fit of the moſt extraordinary nature. I cannot avoid making one remark here, which may be of great practical utility. It is, that fits, though they go by different names, and are aſcribed to a great variety of cauſes, may all be ranked under the general appellation of nervous affections, and are almoſt always the conſequence of bad nurſing or injudicious treatment in childhood. Few children, properly nurſed, have fits; and of thoſe who are improperly managed, few eſcape them. Poor

BELL

BELL WILSON was one of the unfortunate clafs.

On my being fent for to attend this young woman, who was then fixteen, I was informed that fhe had been fubject to fits for about three years, and had taken a great deal of medicine by the advice of feveral of the faculty, but without having experienced any benefit. Though the perfon who gave me this account made ufe of the word *fits*, I foon found that, ftrictly fpeaking, it was only *one fit*, that affumed two different forms or ftates, which followed one another in conftant fucceffion during the whole of the above period.

In order to give a precife idea of this fingular kind of fit, I fhall call its firft ftate active, and the fecond paffive. During the former, the young woman made ufe of the moft violent exertions, fpringing up, throwing her arms about, and ftriking them againft every thing which

which came within her reach. At the ſame time, ſhe uttered a ſort of noiſe, conſiſting of three notes, which was more like the cry of ſome wild beaſt than any thing human.

An univerſal ſpaſm ſucceeded thoſe ſtrange agitations, and every limb became as ſtiff and inflexible as if it had been ſuddenly petrified. Her whole appearance was that of a ſtatue made of Parian marble. In this ſtate of rigidity ſhe continued ſometimes for one hour, ſometimes two, and often three or four; but the moment it was over, ſhe began with the cry and motion above deſcribed.

The active convulſion never laſted ſo long as the rigid ſtate; but it was the only time at which any thing could be got down her throat. As ſhe would not admit ſubſtances of the leaſt ſolidity into her mouth, the little nutriment which ſhe received was always given

given in a fluid form, and chiefly conſiſted of ſmall-beer, or wine and water. Her evacuations, either by ſtool or urine, were of courſe very trifling, and ſhe was wholly inſenſible of both. Notwithſtanding the thinneſs of her diet, ſhe did not appear emaciated or ghaſtly; on the contrary, ſhe was tolerably well in fleſh, and her countenance, though quite void of colour, was rather pleaſing. Her figure was exquiſitely fine, the diſeaſe did not ſeem to have prevented her growth in height, though it had in ſtrength, and in bulk or expanſion; ſhe was very ſlender, but as tall as moſt young women of the ſame age. Such were the moſt ſtriking peculiarities of her ſituation when I paid my firſt viſit.

As all the voluntary motions were ſuſpended, and the involuntary alone took place, I thought that by exciting the former I might ſuppreſs the latter, which had ſo long agitated the ſyſtem. But

But before I had recourſe to ſtimulants, I was induced, by the tone of confidence with which I had often heard anodynes and antiſpaſmodics ſpoken of by profeſſional men of eminence, to try them firſt; but the experiment, though fairly made and duly perſevered in, was not attended with the leaſt ſucceſs. And here I muſt obſerve, that, after forty years' farther practice, I have never found the effect of antiſpaſmodics in ſuch caſes to correſpond with the high reputation which they long retained in the medical world. I know it has been the uſual method, when the actions of the ſyſtem appeared to be inverted, to employ this claſs of medicines, in order to reſtore regularity and to take off the ſuppoſed ſpaſm. I am far from being inclined to queſtion the veracity of the favourable reports made by others of the iſſue of their experiments,—I candidly ſtate the reſult of my own, which has wholly deſtroyed my reliance on that mode of proceeding.

After

After the failure of the above attempts, in which I was more guided by the example of others than by the dictates of my own mind, I reſolved to try the effect of irritation on the moſt ſenſible parts, which were often rubbed with æther, and other volatile ſpirits. I preſcribed at the ſame time the internal uſe of tonics, particularly chalybeated wine, and the compound tincture of bark*. Appearances ſoon became favourable: but as the change for the better was ſlow, the parents were perſuaded by ſomebody to try the cold bath; and this raſh ſtep proved almoſt fatal to my hopes, and to their fondeſt wiſhes.

The reader ſhould be informed, that the aſtoniſhing ſingularity of the girl's diſorder had filled the minds of the

* I have here omitted the detail of doſes and effects, uſually given in medical caſes, as I am not writing inſtructions for the treatment of diſeaſes, but cautions to mothers concerning the nurſing of their children.

country people all round with the wildeſt and moſt ſuperſtitious conjectures. The general opinion was, that the complaint muſt be owing to evil ſpirits, and that the girl was certainly poſſeſſed. Some were for putting her into water, where they were ſure ſhe would ſwim. Others ſaid that, if ſhe was laid upon the fire, ſhe would undoubtedly fly up the chimney. One bold captain of horſe, a man of more reſolution than intellect, declared his readineſs to expel the foul fiend by ſhooting the girl, if the parents would give him leave. Her mother, who was not deficient in natural good ſenſe, though in the education of her daughter ſhe had ſuffered her fondneſs to get the better of her underſtanding, paid no regard to ſuch abſurd and ridiculous propoſals; but ſhe yielded to the importunities of a friend, who had deſcribed to her with great earneſtneſs and plauſibility the wonderful effects of the cold bath.

A ſingle

A ſingle immerſion convinced the parents of their dangerous error. All the ſymptoms were aggravated in the moſt alarming manner. The duration of the rigid ſtate of the body was extended from a few hours to eleven days. She would then have been buried, had I not poſitively forbidden her mother, whatever might happen, to have her interred, till I ſhould give my aſſent. At the time of this laſt attack, I was upon a journey to a diſtant part of the country. On my return home, I was told that my patient was dead; but that her burial had been delayed till I ſhould ſee her. When I called, I found her to all appearance what the people had deſcribed her, a lifeleſs corpſe. On examining the body, however, I thought I perceived ſome degree of warmth about the region of the heart. This confirmed me in my previous deſign to make every attempt to reſtore animation. It was a conſiderable time before any ſymptoms of life appeared: at length, the girl ſet up

her old cry, and began to throw her arms about as uſual.

After having ſo far ſucceeded, the parents implicitly followed my farther directions, and did not throw any new obſtacle in the way of a cure. I again had recourſe to the tonics before mentioned, with ſuch nouriſhment as the girl could be brought to ſwallow. The violence of the convulſive motions gradually abated, and the duration of the rigid ſtate of the fit grew ſhorter and ſhorter; till, in about ſix months, the whole ceaſed, and the regular and natural actions of the ſyſtem returned.

The ſtate of this girl's mind, as well as of her body, on her recovery, was as extraordinary as her diſeaſe. It is common to all perſons, who fall into fits, to have no remembrance of what happens during the paroxyſm. This young woman not only was inſenſible of every occurrence and of the progreſs of time during her long fit, but her malady had com-

completely blotted out all recollection of every event before that period, and even the traces of all knowledge which ſhe had acquired from the moment of her birth till her illneſs. I have indeed known a ſingle fit of twenty-four hours' duration to deſtroy the powers of the mind, and produce abſolute idiotiſm; but that was not the caſe here. The mental faculties, after a total ſuſpenſion for four years, were not deſtroyed, but reduced to an infant ſtate; and, though void of knowledge, were as capable of acquiring it as ever.

It was juſt the ſame with regard to ſpeech, and to the proper management of the legs and arms, of which ſhe knew as little at the time of her recovery as at the inſtant of her birth. Nothing could be more curious than to hear her liſping for ſome months the *namby pamby* of a child, and to trace her progreſs in the imitation of ſounds and the uſe of language. As ſoon as ſhe could converſe,

ſhe was told how long ſhe had been ill, ſhe cried, but could not believe it. When ſome books, which ſhe had written at ſchool, were ſhewn to her, ſhe thought it impoſſible they could be her's, and was poſitive that the whole muſt be a mockery. In the courſe of time, ſhe yielded to the concurrent teſtimony of others; but ſhe remained unconſcious of any former ſtate of exiſtence.

Her new attempts to walk were as aukward as her attempts to ſpeak; and ſhe required nearly as much time to recover the perfect uſe of her legs as of her tongue. Even after ſhe had acquired a conſiderable degree of ſtrength, ſhe wanted expertneſs in her motions, and was obliged to be led about by the arms like a baby. Whenever I called to ſee her, I made a point of taking her into the garden to walk with me; but it was with great difficulty that I could prevent her from falling. We often lament the weak-

weakneſs of infancy: yet were we to come full grown into the world, we ſhould not only be as long in learning to walk as infants are, but our firſt eſſays would be infinitely more dangerous.

It is unneceſſary to trace any farther the ſteps by which this young woman advanced to the full re-eſtabliſhment of her health, and to the perfect uſe of all her mental and corporeal faculties. Theſe great ends were gained by a mode of treatment the very reverſe of the enervating plan which had been the cauſe of her long ſufferings, but which, happily for her, was not afterwards reſumed. I ſhall leave tender parents to make their own reflections on this caſe, and ſhall now only urge it as a farther caution againſt the too haſty interment of perſons who may ſeem to expire in a fit. Unequivocal proofs of death ſhould always be waited for, and every adviſable means of reſuſcitation perſevered in,

when we conſider how long appearances may be deceitful, and how unexpectedly the latent ſparks of life may be re-kindled.

Beſides the uncommon inſtance of this young woman's re-animation, as it may be called, I have heard of a young lady in Holland, who was reſtored to h e deſponding friends, after ſhe had been for nine days apparently in a ſtate of death. The day before her propoſed interment, her doctor called to take his final leave of her; but fancying that he perceived ſome vital ſymptom, he renewed his before hopeleſs efforts, and had the happineſs to ſucceed. This girl's caſe differed from that of my patient in one very remarkable particular: I am told that, in her ſeemingly inanimate ſtate, ſhe was all the while perfectly conſcious of being alive, though ſhe could not ſtir, nor ſpeak, and that her only terror was leſt ſhe ſhould be buried alive.

CHAP. VII.

OF EMPLOYMENTS UNFAVOURABLE TO THE GROWTH AND HEALTH OF CHILDREN.

THOUGH my remarks on air and exercife render it lefs neceffary to be very minute in my detail of occupations which preclude the full enjoyment of thofe effential requifites, yet fome little illuftration in a few inftances may have its ufe. The children of the rich and of the poor are alike facrificed to the miftaken views of their parents, the former by confinement at home or at fchool, for the fake of fome trifling attainments, and the latter, by premature endeavours to get a livelihood. There is, however, a very material difference between both, as the error in one cafe, arifing from fafhion or caprice, is infinitely lefs pardonable than the other, which is too often occafioned by want.

It is ſtrange that mothers in the higher ranks of life, who muſt have felt or frequently obſerved the debilitating effects of faſhionable modes of education, ſhould perſiſt in making their own daughters ſit for hours together at a tambour-frame, or at the needle in learning fancy works, which can never be of the leaſt ſervice, but muſt do their health and their form irreparable injury. The very poſtures, in which they are thus employed, not only tend to diſtort their pliant limbs and bodies, but to impede the action of the principal organs of life, which require above all things an expanded cheſt for the eaſy performance of their reſpective functions. I cannot too often repeat that perſonal deformities, pale complexions, head-achs, pains of the ſtomach, loſs of appetite, indigeſtion, conſumptions, and numberleſs other enemies of youth and beauty, are the ſure conſequences of long continuance in a ſitting or inclining attitude. What ſo many young ladies ſuffer at a

critical time of life, and the ſtill greater danger which often awaits them when they become wives and mothers, are chiefly owing to the ſame cauſe,—early confinement in ſedentary purſuits, and the want of frequent exerciſe in the open air.

To fetter the active motions of children, as ſoon as they get the uſe of their limbs, is a barbarous oppoſition to nature; and to do ſo, under a pretence of improvement, is an inſult upon common ſenſe. It may, indeed, be the way to train up enervated puppets, but never to form accompliſhed men or women. I always behold, with much heart-felt concern, poor little creatures of ten or twelve years of age, and ſometimes younger, who are exhibited by their ſilly parents as prodigies of learning, or diſtinguiſhed for their extraordinary proficiency in languages, in elocution, in muſic, in drawing, or even in ſome frivolous acquirement. The ſtrength of the mind as well as of the body is exhauſted,

hauſted, and the natural growth of both is checked by ſuch untimely exertions. I am not for diſcouraging the early introduction of youth into the ſweet ſociety of the Muſes and the Graces; but I would have them pay their court alſo to the Goddeſs of Health, and ſpend a conſiderable part of their time, during the above period at leaſt, in her enlivening ſports and gambols.

It would be foreign to my immediate purpoſe to ſay any thing farther of the literary purſuits of boys, than that more frequent intervals between the hours of ſtudy than are now uſual, ſhould be allowed for recreation and active exerciſes. But a much greater reform is wanted in female education, the whole of which appears to be upon a wrong baſis. I leave to others the moral part of this buſineſs, and ſhall only take a medical view of the ſubject. It grieves me to ſee health impaired by a cloſe application to objects of very little conſequence, while

while the moſt important qualifications are diſregarded. Every girl ſhould be brought up with a view of being a wife and a mother; or, whatever her other accompliſhments may be, ſhe will prove totally unfit for the diſcharge of thoſe duties, on which the affections of her huſband, the well-being of her progeny, and her own happineſs, muſt depend. If ſhe herſelf is languid and indolent, how can ſhe hope to bring forth active and vigorous children; and if ſhe knows nothing of the proper management of them, muſt ſhe not have recourſe to hirelings, and truſt entirely to their care, to their ſkill, and to their fidelity, in the deareſt concerns of life?

It is common to ſee women, who are ſuppoſed to have had a very genteel education, ſo ignorant, when they come to have children, of every thing with which a mother ought to be acquainted, that the infant itſelf is as wiſe in theſe matters as its parent. Had the time ſpent by ſuch

ſuch females in the acquiſition of what can never be of any ſervice to them, been employed under the eye of a ſagacious matron in learning domeſtic virtues and the art of rearing children, they would have ſecured the attachment of their huſbands, made their ſons and daughters uſeful members of ſociety, and been themſelves an example and an ornament to the ſex.

If a young man be intended for the army or navy, he is ſent to an academy to be inſtructed in thoſe branches of ſcience which are deemed neceſſary for his making a figure in the propoſed department. But a young woman, who has got a more difficult part to act, has no ſuch opportunities afforded her. She is ſuppoſed to require no previous courſe of training,—to need no aſſiſtance but that of nature, to fit her for the diſcharge of her duties when ſhe comes to be a mother. Did ſhe live in a ſtate of nature, that idea would not be far wrong; but,

but, in ſociety, every thing is artificial, and muſt be learned as an art.

The art in queſtion, however, can neither be learned from books, nor from converſation. Theſe may have their uſe, but they will not make an accompliſhed nurſe. Indeed, nothing can form this firſt of characters, but practice; and if ſuch practice is not acquired under ſome experienced matron, it will coſt many lives to learn it any where elſe. A mother may blunder on, as moſt of them do, till ſhe has killed a number of children, before ſhe is capable of rearing one. At laſt, perhaps, ſhe ſucceeds. It is in this way we find many wealthy citizens, who have had ſeveral children, yet die without any, or leave only one to enjoy their ample fortune.

All practical things are the moſt difficult to learn, becauſe they can only be learned from obſervation and experiment. Thus I have known a girl, whoſe mother

mother had eighteen children, take one of them and bring it up by the hand, merely from the force of example and imitation. Had this girl ſtudied the art under the ableſt medical inſtructors, or read the beſt books that ever were written on the ſubject, ſhe could not have done what ſhe effected with the utmoſt eaſe, becauſe ſhe had ſo often ſeen it ſucceed under her mother's management.

The inference is very plain: that acquirements of little value, or merely ornamental, ought not to be aſſiduouſly cultivated at the expence of health, or to the neglect of things of the firſt importance; and that a great part of the time inconſiderately ſpent by young ladies in fancy works, and in learning to draw, to paint, or to play upon ſome muſical inſtrument, of which they will never feel the want, or which at beſt will afford them only a momentary gratification, had much better be employed in

in practical leſſons on the duties of wives and mothers, which they will be ſoon called upon to diſcharge, and their ignorance of which will coſt them many an aching heart.

As to the other evil before hinted at, which is owing to poverty, and which conſiſts in putting young children to ſedentary or unwholeſome employments, in order to get their bread, it is a matter of the moſt painful conſideration, when viewed either by the eye of humanity or of policy. The ſource of the ſweeteſt pleaſures is thus embittered to the parent; and ſociety loſes the valuable ſervices of the man, through the feeble, untimely, and exhauſting efforts of the child. In vain do we look for the full grown fruits of autumn, after a too early expanſion of the buds of ſpring; and we never ſee a colt, if put too ſoon to hard labour, turn out a ſtrong and active horſe.

When I touched upon this ſubject in the firſt chapter of my "Domeſtic Medicine," I thought I could not urge a ſtronger proof of my aſſertion, that the conſtitutions of children were ruined by ſuch premature endeavours to earn a livelihood, than the immenſe number of rickety, ſcrophulous, and diminutive creatures, that ſwarm in all our manufacturing towns. There the infants ſuffer ſeverely in the very firſt ſtage of life, for want of proper exerciſe and proper nurſing, while the diſtreſſed mothers are buſy at other work. The next ſtep, almoſt as ſoon as they feel the uſe of their legs and arms, is to employ them in ſome of the ſubordinate or preparatory parts of the manufactures, which are the more injurious to growth and health for requiring conſtant confinement rather than active exertion. Very few of thoſe poor objects attain to maturity, and fewer ſtill to manly vigour. Moſt of them die very young, and the reſt are weak and ſickly all their lives, ſo that inca-

incapacity of labour at an advanced age is the ſure conſequence of the ſorry earnings of childhood.

But there is another ſet of devoted beings more pitiable ſtill than thoſe which I have now deſcribed—I mean the children that are bound apprentices to chimney-ſweepers. If any creature can exiſt in a ſtate of greater wretchedneſs, or is a juſter object of commiſeration than a boy who is forced to clean chimneys in this country, I am very much miſtaken. Half naked in the moſt bitter cold, he creeps along the ſtreets by break of day—the ice cutting through his feet—his legs bent—and his body twiſted. In this ſtate, he is compelled to work his way up thoſe dirty noiſome paſſages, many of which are almoſt too narrow for a cat to climb. In order to ſubdue the terror which he muſt feel in his firſt attempts, his ſavage maſter often lights up ſome wet ſtraw in the fire-place, which leaves the poor creature no

alternative but that of certain ſuffocation, or of inſtantly getting to the top. I have witneſſed ſtill greater cruelty: I have more than once ſeen a boy, when the chimney was all in a blaze, forced down the vent, like a bundle of wet rags, to extinguiſh the flame.

On the very day (the twenty-ſecond of laſt October) when I was come to this part of my ſubject, an indictment for cruelty to a young chimney-ſweeper happened to be tried at the Weſtminſter ſeſſions. The wretched ſufferer had been decoyed into the houſe of a woman who carried on this horrid buſineſs, but who promiſed to employ him only as an errand-boy. He had not been long there, however, before he was put to learn the trade, as it is called. Some domeſtic leſſons were deemed neceſſary to prepare him for public exhibition. The child, not being able to climb with the readineſs expected, uſed to be ſtripped naked by the foreman, and whipped round the

room with birch rods. His body, legs, and arms were ſeverely bruiſed by the beatings he had received. This was not all. Though his knees and elbows had been rendered ſore by repeated trials, yet when the poor creature could not mount quick enough, his cruel inſtructor uſed to goad him (while in the chimney) in the legs and thighs, by a needle put into the end of a ſtick.

It alſo came out in the courſe of the evidence, that unfortunate children of this ſort are taught to climb by being taken to the porch of St. George's church, where, at the riſk of their lives, they are obliged to mount the perpendicular wall. I am always happy to ſee juſtice tempered with mercy, eſpecially when the puniſhment is at the diſcretion of the judge or magiſtrate; but after a culprit had been fully convicted of thoſe atrocious acts, I could not help thinking that lenity towards him was carried too far in ſentencing

him only to ſix months' impriſonment. I am ſtill more grieved to think, that any buſineſs which requires ſuch dreadful modes of training, ſhould be tolerated.

Perhaps I ſhall be told, that boys ſo trained are neceſſary. I deny the aſſertion. Chimneys are kept clean, without ſuch cruel and dangerous means, not only in many countries on the continent, but even in ſome parts of our own iſland, where the houſes are much higher than in London. In North Britain, for inſtance, a bunch of furze or of broom anſwers the purpoſe, and does the buſineſs cheaper and better. One man ſtands at the top and another at the bottom of the chimney, when a rope is let down by means of a ball; and the bunch of furze or of broom, being properly faſtened on, is pulled up and down till the chimney is quite cleaned. The little trouble and expence attending the operation are the ſtrongeſt incite-

ments

ments to repeat it ſo often as to preclude the poſſibility of a chimney's ever taking fire. Is this the caſe in London, though hundreds of lives are every year ſacrificed to the moſt barbarous method of preventing danger? How vain ſhall we find the boaſts that are made of mighty improvements in the metropolis of the Britiſh empire, if we fairly conſider that it is at leaſt a century behind the meaneſt village in the kingdom, in almoſt every thing that regards the preſervation of human life!

I have often heard the plea of neceſſity urged to juſtify doing wrong, but never more abſurdly than in the employment of boys to clean chimneys. Experience clearly proves that it can be much better done without them; and ſhall we, in perverſe oppoſition to reaſon and humanity, continue a practice which is equally forbidden by both? The abolition of the ſlave-trade has of late years become a very popular topic

among us; and the cauſe of the poor Africans has been pleaded with lips of fire in our ſenate. But while our pride is flattered by the idea of relieving ſlaves abroad, we make a ſet of our fellow-ſubjects at home infinitely greater ſlaves, and far more miſerable! This is ſomething like the faſhionable chimera of univerſal philanthropy, which pretends to be alive to the ſufferings of the diſtant Hottentots, but in reality ſteels the heart againſt ſpectacles of much keener wretchedneſs in our own ſtreets.

My late worthy friend, JONAS HANWAY, who literally *went about, doing good*, uſed all his influence to ameliorate the condition of thoſe unhappy creatures; which, in a certain degree, he effected. But there are ſome cuſtoms, that can be thoroughly mended, only by being completely aboliſhed. While boys are forced up chimneys, they muſt be miſerable, whatever laws are made for their relief. A law prohibiting the practice

tice altogether, would be at once laying the axe to the root of the tree; and the evil admits of no other remedy.

Had Mr. HANWAY taken up the matter upon this ground, he had ſpirit and perſeverance ſufficient to have carried it through, and to have obtained an act of parliament for the effectual relief of the moſt wretched beings on the face of the earth. He confined his benevolent exertions to a partial alleviation of their miſeries, becauſe it had never occurred to him, that the *climbing boys*, as he calls them, were wholly unneceſſary. What a pity that he did not carry his views a little farther, as, in that caſe, he certainly would not have remained ſatisfied with any thing ſhort of their total emancipation from ſuch cruel and uſeleſs bondage!

The ſituation of thoſe children of miſery is now become more hopeleſs, in conſequence of the death of Lady MONTAGUE,

TAGUE, who uſed to make ſuch of them as could go to her houſe, happy for at leaſt one day in the long and lingering year. I often wiſhed to ſee her well-known talents exerted in their favour: they could not have had an abler or a better advocate. The amiableneſs of her character would have given additional force to the impreſſive productions of her pen; and the legiſlature might have been induced to interpoſe its authority in ſuppreſſing an employment at once ſo deſtructive and ſo degrading to the human ſpecies.

But ſurely there is humanity enough in both houſes of parliament to take up this ſubject, without any other appeal to their feelings than a bare repreſentation of facts.

Many touches more would be neceſſary to finiſh the melancholy picture of the wretchedneſs of young chimney-ſweepers. It is enough for me to ſketch the

the principal outlines, in hopes that ſome perſon more at leiſure may be induced to lay on the internal colouring. In addition, however, to the miſeries already deſcribed, I muſt not omit the malignity of the diſorders, with which thoſe poor creatures, if they live long enough, are almoſt ſure to be afflicted. They are not only deformed and ſtunted in their growth, but, in conſequence of having their pores clogged, and the ſurface of their bodies continually covered with a coat of dirt compoſed of ſoot, ſweat, &c. they are ſubject to various maladies unknown to the reſt of mankind.

I need only give an inſtance of one of thoſe diſeaſes, which is called by the ſufferers the *ſoot-wart*, but which the late Mr. POTT has very properly named the *Chimney-ſweepers' cancer*. He deſcribes it as a ragged, ill-looking ſore, with hard and riſing edges,—rapid in its progreſs, painful in all its attacks,

and moſt certainly deſtructive in its event. Extirpation by the knife, on its firſt appearance, and the immediate removal of the part affected, he looks upon as the only chance of putting a ſtop to, or preventing the fatal iſſue of the diſeaſe. His reflection on the ſubject does equal honour to his heart and to his underſtanding. "The fate of theſe people," ſays he, "ſeems ſingularly hard. In their early infancy, they are moſt frequently treated with great brutality, and almoſt ſtarved with cold and hunger. They are thruſt up narrow, and ſometimes hot chimneys, where they are bruiſed, burned, and almoſt ſuffocated; and when they get to puberty, they become peculiarly liable to a moſt noiſome, painful, and fatal diſeaſe."

CHAP. VIII.

OF ACCIDENTS.

CHILDREN are not only lamed and maimed, but they often loſe their lives by accidents, owing to the careleſſneſs or inconſiderate neglect of nurſes and mothers. A child ſhould never be left alone in a place of danger, or in any ſituation where he may, through his own want of experience, be expoſed to the deſtructive elements of fire and water. We daily hear of children that have been burned to death, in conſequence of their clothes having caught fire; and even grown people often loſe their lives by ſimilar accidents.

Afflicting events of this kind often take place even under the mother's eye; and, what is ſurpriſing, their frequency does not prepare women for the moſt effectual method of extinguiſhing the fire. Diſtracted by the frightful ſcene, and the

the cries of the ſufferer, they ruſh to tear off the burning clothes. But, before this can be effected, the miſchief is done. The attempt, therefore, ſhould never be made. The clothing, inſtead of being torn off, ought to be preſſed cloſe to the body, and whatever is at hand wrapped over it, ſo as to exclude the air, upon which the blaze will go out. It is the action of the air that keeps it alive, and increaſes its vehemence. A carpet, a table-cloth, a blanket, any cloſe wrapper, will inſtantly extinguiſh it. Ladies, whoſe dreſs is ſo very liable to catch fire, ſhould in ſuch a caſe have recourſe to theſe means, and be their own preſervers, inſtead of running out of the room, fanning the flame, and uſeleſsly ſcreaming for help, which comes too late to ſave them from tortures and from death.

Our newſpapers frequently contain accounts of perſons, who, by running about, not only accelerate their own deſtruc-

deſtruction, but frighten others into an abſolute incapacity of affording them any aſſiſtance. A caſe nearly of this ſort very lately fell under my own obſervation. A beautiful woman, with her clothes in a blaze, had been ſuffered to run out into the ſtreet, before any body ventured to approach her. A hackney-coachman, ſeeing her in this ſituation, jumped off his box, and, wrapping his coat round her, extinguiſhed the flames. Though her life was ſaved, no remedy could be found for the cruel ravages of the fire on her perſon. She loſt the uſe of ſome of her limbs, and was moſt ſhockingly disfigured. Few people are ignorant of what ought to be done to extinguiſh flame; but preſence of mind or courage is wanting in the moment of ſudden danger, and the conſequences are of courſe deplorable.

I admire the practical philoſophy of the good women in North Britain, who are employed in ſpinning flax, or *tow* as they

they call it. Whenever the flax round their diſtaff catches fire by any accident, they immediately wrap their apron about it, and it is out in an inſtant. But where the fire affects an animated being, eſpecially a darling child, I am afraid few mothers would have the reſolution to act in the ſame manner. Nor is this the caſe with mothers only. I have known a father ſtand by, and ſee his darling daughter burned to death, without any immediate and rational effort for her relief: the powers both of his mind and body were ſuſpended by the ſhock; and he remained like a ſtatue at the very criſis of the alarming cataſtrophe. Nay, I have known children carried into the ſtreet, that the air might extinguiſh the flame.

It muſt be evident enough, from what I have ſaid of exceſſive care in the treatment of children, that I would not have mothers or nurſes over-ſolicitous about trifles. But where expoſure to danger may

may be attended with irreparable miſchief, it cannot be too cautiouſly guarded againſt. I would therefore have the upper garments of children, when they can run about, made of woollen materials, which do not ſo readily catch fire as manufactures of flax and cotton. I would alſo have children taught very early to dread the fire; and I think that the beſt way of impreſſing their minds with the danger of coming too near it, is to ſuffer them to burn their fingers ſlightly, yet ſo as to give them ſome pain. This would have more effect than a thouſand admonitions.

When children are cold, they are very apt to get cloſe to the fire; by which means they not only run the riſk of being burned, but of inducing whitloes or other inflammatory diſorders of the extremities. In theſe caſes, however, I would not have the preventive care of the nurſes or parents carried too far. The actual experience of the tin-

gling effect will operate more powerfully than any thing which can be ſaid to young people to make them avoid it: when they have once felt the ſmart, a few words to remind them of the cauſe will be quite ſufficient; and they will eaſily acquire the habit of rubbing their hands and running about, rather than going to the fire to warm themſelves, after having been out in the cold.

I have always been glad to find thoſe ſemicircular irons, called *guards*, fixed up round fire-places in nurſeries, and in all the apartments to which children had acceſs. It gives me ſtill greater pleaſure to ſee wire-fenders, two or three feet in height, now frequently made uſe of even in parlours and drawing-rooms. They are excellent preſervatives from the danger to which grown perſons, particularly ladies, as well as giddy boys and girls, may be expoſed, when ſtanding or ſitting by the fire.

Children

Children are very fond of roaſting things, ſuch as cheſnuts, potatoes, &c. in the fire. I knew a lady, who had nearly loſt her life by an accident ariſing from a circumſtance of this ſort. A little boy was poking in the fire for a potatoe, which he had put in to roaſt; his clothes caught the flame, and, though his mother was ſtanding by, he was dreadfully burned. She, being a nurſe at the time, held an infant in her arms, which rendered her leſs capable of aſſiſting the other child. The effect of the ſhock on herſelf was ſeriouſly alarming; it dried up her breaſt-milk, and produced a fever, the violence of which left little hopes of her recovery for three weeks: ſhe was then ſeized with a convulſion fit, which came on critically, like that which often precedes the eruption of the ſmall-pox in infants, and is far from being an unfavourable ſymptom. Her fit proved equally ſalutary; it abated the force of the fever, and ſhe grew better every day after. This

lady was attended by my excellent friend the late Dr. John Gregory and myſelf, who had both deſpaired of her recovery.

The accidents from ſcalding are ſtill more numerous. Children are in continual danger where victuals are cooking; and, among the lower and middle ranks, the kitchen is the nurſery. One of the fineſt boys I ever ſaw, loſt his life in this manner. He was dancing round the kitchen, when a pot full of food for ſome domeſtic animals, which had been juſt taken off the fire, ſtood in his way: he fell backwards, and was ſo ſcalded, that, in ſpite of all my beſt endeavours, he died.

Nothing hot ſhould ever be left within a child's reach; otherwiſe he will very probably pull it over him: in which caſe, before the clothes can be got off, he may be ſcalded to death. Children are alſo apt to carry every thing to the mouth; and a very ſmall quantity

quantity of any liquid, boiling hot, will occaſion death, if taken into the ſtomach. A melancholy proof of this occurred not long ſince. A child put the ſpout of a tea-kettle to its mouth, and drank a little of the boiling water, which proved almoſt inſtantly fatal. Numberleſs inſtances have come to my knowledge, of children having pulled off the table diſhes full of hot victuals, with which they were ſcalded in a terrible manner. Indeed, victuals, or any thick ſubſtances, in a burning hot ſtate, are much worſe than fluids, as they adhere more cloſely to the ſkin.

Perhaps there is not a more painful death, than that which is the conſequence of ſcalding or burning. When inſtantaneous, it is nothing; but, when lingering, it is dreadful beyond imagination. We can only form ſome imperfect idea of it from the intenſe pain occaſioned by ſcalds or burns, though not of deadly effect. I once had a pa-

tient, about one half of whoſe ſkin was ſcalded, by falling into a boiler. Though this man recovered, yet ſo great was his agony, that, every time he was dreſſed, he uſed to beg and pray to be put to death.

Accidents by *cold* water, though not ſo frequent in early life as thoſe occaſioned by fire, ought neverthelefs to be guarded againſt with due precaution. Children, who have no idea that theſe elements are hoſtile to life, are often dead before they know their danger. Wells and pieces of water near houſes are frequently left open, or without any fence round them, as if they were deſigned for traps to lure the unwary to deſtruction. Is it not well known, that young people are fond of looking into the water, eſpecially when they can ſee their own image or likeneſs? And, is it an uncommon thing for them, when viewing themſelves in the watery mirror, to tumble in, and to be drowned? Even

Even to this day I ſhudder at the recollection of a draw-well in my father's garden, without the leaſt railing to keep children at a proper diſtance. A thouſand times, in playful mood, have I ſported on the margin of the abyſs, and cannot now conceive how I eſcaped a fatal ſlip. It is a weak ſecurity againſt the danger of open wells, or ponds, or pits, or the like cavities, to tell a child to take care. The effect of ſuch a ſilly piece of advice is well expoſed in GAY's fable of the old hen and the young cock; of which the moral is—

"Reſtrain your child—you'll ſoon believe
"The text which ſays, we ſprung from Eve."

But it is not only in yards and gardens that the leaſt ſlip may ſometimes be fatal to children; they are often expoſed to almoſt as much danger within doors, by falls in various ſituations. I ſhall firſt mention the dark and winding ſtair-caſes, which remain in all old houſes, eſpecially in that part of Lon-

don which is called the *City*. Children muſt be endued with a degree of precaution far beyond their years, to avoid tumbling upon thoſe ſtairs; and, if they do make a falſe ſtep, they often roll from the top to the bottom, As, from the uſual lightneſs of a child, a leg or an arm is ſeldom broken by ſuch an accident, little notice is taken of it at the time; but although it may not ſeem to do much hurt for the preſent, it often lays the foundation of future maladies. The fine organization or ſtructure of the brain may receive a dangerous ſhock; and there is reaſon to believe that the *hydrocephalus internus* is ſometimes the conſequence of bruiſes, or blows, or other injuries done to the head. I loſt a moſt promiſing boy, through an affection of his brain, which I thought was owing to a fall from a kitchen-dreſſer.

All children have an inclination to climb, and to get upon ſtools, chairs, tables,

tables, &c. A fall from one of theſe is more dangerous than mothers and nurſes are apt to imagine. A child's head is large, and, being ſpecifically heavier than the body, is the part moſt liable to ſtrike the ground, and thus to cauſe a concuſſion of the brain, which may be attended with fatal conſequences. All the furniture of a nurſery ſhould be low, ſo as to preclude at once the deſire of climbing and the danger of falling. The tables ſhould alſo be made without corners, as theſe ſharp projections often do miſchief. I have already declared myſelf a warm advocate for indulging the reſtleſs activity of children, on which their growth and health very much depend; but, till they acquire reaſon and experience to guide them, it is the buſineſs of their parents to take care, that they move about, and always remain in a ſphere of perfect ſafety.

For the ſame reaſon, nurſes ſhould never leave any deadly weapon within the

the reach of children. Knives and ſharp inſtruments, with which they may cut or wound themſelves, are very improper playthings. Yet I remember to have read in ſome newſpaper a curious ſtory, of ſeveral lives having been ſaved by a knife in the hand of an infant. It happened near one of thoſe extenſive woods on the continent, whence hungry wolves often ſally forth in queſt of prey. The wife of a peaſant, who lived in a cottage at no great diſtance, was gone out upon ſome buſineſs, leaving an infant in the cradle, under the care of three or four more of her young family, one of whom gave a knife to the baby to amuſe it. During the mother's abſence, a wolf, impelled by hunger, ruſhed into the cottage, and made its firſt ſnap at the infant's arm, which, being extended with the knife in a playful manner, it entered the throat of the ravenous animal, and proved its death. As the women in our happy iſland have no occaſion to arm their children againſt ſuch enemies, I do

do not ſuppoſe that they will be tempted, by the deſire of hearing their infants cried up as heroes, to intruſt them with weapons, which are far more likely to hurt than to defend them.

But to return to more ſerious and neceſſary precautions: I muſt next take notice of ſome fatal accidents which frequently occur, though they may be eaſily guarded againſt. We daily hear of children falling from windows and being killed: this muſt be owing to the want of proper preſervatives; a few bars fixed acroſs the windows of the nurſery, or of any high apartments where children are ſuffered to play about, would prevent ſuch diſaſters. Yet eaſy as the remedy is, we find it too often neglected. How frequently have I ſeen, with much alarm, children hanging out of windows in a ſtate of imminent danger, and no regard paid to them by any perſon within! This is peculiarly the caſe with the children of the

the poor in London, who commonly live in the upper ſtories, and ſeldom or never have their windows ſecured by bars. To keep ſuch windows conſtantly ſhut would exclude the freſh air, ſo neceſſary to health, and even to exiſtence; while, on the other hand, having them open, without the guard or defence here recommended, is expoſing the giddy and thoughtleſs to certain miſchief. On the leaſt noiſe in the ſtreet, a child is apt to run to the window, and, leaning forward in eager gaze, is often daſhed againſt the pavement.

In my former remarks on *hanging cots*, my chief aim was to ſhew how much ſafer and more conducive to ſleep their gentle motion was, than the violent and dangerous rocking of a cradle. I have now an obſervation of greater extent to make on beds in general, which is, that they often prove fatal to children, inſtead of being places of eaſy and ſecure repoſe. It is too cuſtomary for mothers and

and nurſes to take infants into bed with them for the whole night. This is always relaxing, and ſometimes attended with the melancholy effect of ſuffocation. Either in France or in Holland, I am not now poſitive which, there is a prohibitory law againſt putting any child to ſleep in the ſame bed with its mother or nurſe. Though we have no ſuch law in England, maternal care ought to ſupply the want of it, eſpecially as it is not an extraordinary, or a very uncommon thing, to hear of a child's being ſmothered by the accidental rolling or preſſure a grown perſon during ſleep.

The uſe of *turn-up* bedſteads is not leſs noxious or dangerous. They exclude the air from the bedclothes all day, and render them frowzy and unwholeſome. Children may alſo be inadvertently killed in them. The ſervant, or perhaps the mother, turns up the bed in a hurry, without examining whether the child is in it or not: the infant, incapable of

making any noiſe in this ſituation, is ſmothered before the miſtake is found out; and tears flow in vain to remedy what a little caution might have prevented, or what could never have happened in a proper bed.

Children ſuffocated in this manner, as well as thoſe accidentally overlaid, might be ſometimes reſtored to life. Yet I do not recollect any inſtances, except the one mentioned in my "Domeſtic Medicine," of its having been done; though it muſt be as practicable as in caſes of drowning, of fits, and various other caſualties, attended with a ſuſpenſion or ſeeming extinction of all the vital powers. It is not my buſineſs, however, to ſuggeſt the uſe of very precarious reſtoratives, when the means of prevention are ſo eaſy and certain.

I ſhould never have done, were I to engage in a particular deſcription of all the dangers to which children are ex-

poſed in our ſtreets, partly through the want of a good medical police, and partly through the negligence of their parents. The importance and the neceſſity of the former, I may take ſome other opportunity to enlarge upon; my preſent wiſh is, to excite the attention of mothers to the perils which await their children at almoſt every corner, when they are ſuffered to run about by themſelves, or intruſted to young people who have neither ſufficient ſtrength nor experience to protect them. It always gives me great uneaſineſs to ſee infants dandled by girls who are hardly able to hold them up, or led about by others whoſe giddineſs is more likely to plunge them into danger than to keep them out of it. At leaſt half the accidents that befal children, both within doors and without, are owing to the folly, the cruelty, I had almoſt ſaid the murderous criminality of leaving one child to the care of another, who, though a little older,

older, is not leſs in want of a mother's or a nurſe's vigilance.

Let me aſk any parent of common ſenſe and tender feelings, whether it can be fairly conſidered as much ſhort of murder, to let a little girl of ſeven or eight years of age take an infant out in her arms, or lead about younger children than herſelf, in ſuch a city as London, where carts and carriages of every deſcription are rattling along—where horſes are galloping—bullocks furiouſly driven—and crowds of people conſtantly ruſhing with thoughtleſs impetuoſity? Is it a wonder, then, to hear every day of children run over, their legs or arms broken, their brains daſhed out, or their bodies cruſhed to atoms, in the midſt of thoſe dangers to which they are ſo inconſiderately expoſed? Though the immediate authors of ſuch diſaſters deſerve in moſt caſes to be hanged, yet I do not know how any jury could conſcientiouſly

acquit

acquit the negligent parent of ſome participation in the crime.

Let me therefore conjure mothers, in particular, never to permit their young children to go alone into the ſtreets, and never to rely upon one child's protection of another. It is alſo a mother's duty to make her children, as ſoon as they are capable of it, aware of danger, and to inſtruct them how to avoid the numberleſs enemies that beſet them on all ſides, and too often prove fatal to infant life. A good police would certainly go a great way towards the prevention of many of thoſe diſaſters which ſo frequently occur in our ſtreets, but no laws can ever be made that will ſuperſede the mother's care and attention in watching over the health and ſafety of her children.

CHAP. IX.

OF FOUNDLING HOSPITALS, AND OTHER CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS FOR THE REARING OF POOR OR DESERTED CHILDREN.

THE proper qualifications and indiſpenſable duties of mothers having ſo far engaged our attention, I am not without hopes that the remarks which have been made on thoſe important ſubjects, will be of ſome ſervice in the middling and higher ranks of life. But it gives me pain to think, that there are great numbers of poor women, who do not want ſo much to be *taught*, as to be *enabled* to diſcharge their duty. They would willingly devote all their time and care to the nurſing of their children; but the want of common neceſſaries forces

forces them to be otherwiſe employed. They ſee their infants languiſh; but the dread of famine is an object of ſtill keener concern. They are not dead to the impulſes of natural affection; but its warm emotions in their hearts are ſoon chilled by diſtreſs. It is poverty, whoſe icy hand congeals the ſtreams of maternal comfort, and whoſe withering breath blaſts ſome of the faireſt buds of human life.

Vanity is more gratified than reaſon, by the acknowledgment that there is not any country in the known world which is ſo much diſtinguiſhed as England for its charitable inſtitutions. How mortifying it is to add, that there is not any country in which charity is ſo much abuſed and perverted! When I look at ſuch a building as the Foundling Hoſpital, much more like a palace than a nurſery for poor children;—when I conſider the vaſt ſums laid out in raiſing that ſtructure, and the ſtill greater ſums

which have ſince been expended and continue to be expended upon the moſt pompous and leſs uſeful parts of the eſtabliſhment;—I cannot help crying out with ROCHEFOUCAULT, *that virtue or charity would never go ſo far, if pride did not keep her company.*

It is much to be lamented, that the plans for the relief both of the old and the young, in every pitiable ſituation, which at different times have been encouraged by the people of England, ſhould all be connected with ſuperb buildings, profitable jobs, and a train of offices and employments, which prey upon the funds, and render their uſe to the public very ſmall, in compariſon to what it might otherwiſe have been. This groſs miſapplication—this waſte of charitable contributions, is not the only thing to be found fault with in the management of the Foundling Hoſpital. Never did any inſtitution hold out fairer claims to the ſupport of the benevolent and humane,

mane, and never was any more liberally patronized; yet, from ignorance and inexperience, inſtead of preſerving the lives of children, it has too frequently accelerated their death.

The firſt ſuggeſtion of a Foundling Hoſpital was certainly very plauſible: its profeſſed object was to reſcue from miſery and deſtruction the innocent victims that would otherwiſe be doomed to both by the deſertion of their parents. Thus many valuable lives would be ſaved to ſociety, and ſuch a reſource would be opened to unfortunate mothers, as would remove, or conſiderably weaken, any temptation to the commiſſion of the moſt unnatural acts. The prude, the bigot, and the canting hypocrite, might, indeed, condemn ſuch a ſuppoſed encouragement to the illicit union of the ſexes; but humanity can never look upon the preſervation of a human being as a crime.

An undertaking, therefore, of ſo ſpecious a tendency, could not fail to meet with the moſt generous ſupport. Independently of all private contributions, ſixty thouſand pounds a year out of the public money were for ſeveral years appropriated by parliament to ſo laudable a purpoſe. A palace, as I before obſerved, inſtead of a nurſery, ſoon reared its head. The doors were thrown open for the admiſſion of deſerted children from all parts, not to be nurſed and educated there, but to be ſent down to the diſtant counties, and in their conveyance numbers of the poor infants periſhed. I am not here making a vague or an imaginary calculation; I am ſtating what fell under my own notice, when I was phyſician to a very conſiderable branch of the Foundling Hoſpital. I have elſewhere deſcribed the mortality which was occaſioned by the improper uſe of medicines among thoſe who had ſurvived the fatigues of the journey. I have alſo explained the very eaſy means

I made uſe of to put a ſtop to ſuch afflicting ravages, while the children and their nurſes were under my inſpection and control. But all my remonſtrances againſt having them dragged away from thoſe nurſes too ſoon, crowded into hoſpitals, confined in ſchools, or put out to unhealthy employments, were unavailing. I was told, that the eſtabliſhed rules and cuſtoms of the hoſpital could not be deviated from, though their evident effect was to deſtroy health, and to enfeeble the minds as well as the bodies of the unfortunate victims.

I have often viewed with indignation the fallacious reports of the numbers of children ſaid to be brought up and provided for at ſuch places. I am very confident, that were an accurate liſt made out of thoſe who periſhed through unſeaſonable removals, improper treatment, bad nurſing, diſeaſes occaſioned

by too early confinement in ſchools, as well as by infection in hoſpitals, and, laſtly, through what I call murderous occupations, it would appear that not one in ten of the infants received there ever lived to become a uſeful member of ſociety.

But, beſides the evils here hinted at, there is a fundamental error in the plan itſelf, not only of the Foundling Hoſpital, but of all parochial and other charitable inſtitutions for the maintenance and education of poor children. Every ſcheme which tends to ſeparate the parent from the child, whatever impoſing appearance it may wear, is a bad one, and will eventually be found to do miſchief. It is flying in the face of nature, a thing that never can be done with impunity: it is rending aſunder the firſt and the ſtrongeſt bonds of ſociety—parental and filial affection: it is perverſely attempting to blunt and deſtroy that

that fineſt feeling of the heart, motherly love, without which the human ſpecies could not long exiſt. All nature points out the mother for the nurſe of every thing that is brought forth alive; nor can her place be ſupplied by any inſtitution. Thoſe who make the experiment will ſoon be convinced of their temerity and folly.

A few years ago, I met with a letter addreſſed to lord FITZWILLIAM, then viceroy of Ireland, on the ſubject of the proteſtant charity ſchools in that country. As the author's ſentiments agree with mine in many points, and particularly with reſpect to the pernicious effects of ſeparating children from their parents for the ſake of education, I ſhall here give them in his own words. Some people may think the language too ſtrong; but the nature of the ſubject required the moſt pointed energy.

"My Lord, I do requeſt that you will take the trouble of reading the account of this inveterately illiberal inſtitution in any common almanac; and every line will, I think, carry its own reprobation to an ingenuous mind. The children, as it is regulated in their unnatural ſyſtem, are all placed in ſchools remote from their former abodes; or, in other words, they are torn from all the ſweet aſſociations that attend the intereſting idea of home. This is, indeed, a charity which thrives on the extinction of all the other charities of life; *and the feelings of nature muſt be eradicated, before they can become nurſlings of the ſtate.* They are baniſhed from their vicinage to a remote quarter of the kingdom, where all the traces and ties of kindred are loſt and cut off; all habitudes of the heart ſmothered in the cradle; and, when ſent into the world, they know not the ſpot which gave them birth, the mother that bore them, nor the blood that flows in their veins. I think

think of the ſpeech of LOGAN, the Indian chief, when all his kindred were murdered—*There remains not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature.*"

The writer here takes occaſion to direct his remarks to the heart, as well as to the head ;—to exert all his powers of pathetic, as well as of argumentative eloquence. "It is," ſays he, "a cold, cheerleſs, and forlorn feeling of this nature, which muſt freeze the young blood, and, placing the mind in a ſtate of ſullen inſulation, makes its re-action upon ſociety rather dangerous than beneficial. The ties of kindred operate as a ſort of external conſcience upon the conduct of men, deterring them from the commiſſion of great crimes, for fear of the diſgrace which would be reflected on their relations. There is a family pride, a domeſtic honour, among the very pooreſt and loweſt of the community, that guards, and ſanctions, and is

a ſort

a ſort of God for the little houſehold. Even the higheſt have ſuch workings of nature. Lady MACBETH exclaims, *had he not reſembled my father when he ſlept, I had done it.* The imagined countenance of her father was the only conſcience left, and came between her and murder. But charter-ſchool policy makes a ſort of maſſacre of all thoſe domeſtic moralities which operate upon character and conduct, without being able to put a higher and nobler principle of action in their place; and thus, I fear, the ſame policy has bred up many victims for the laws, while they only thought of making proſelytes to a religion."

Though the ſubject is here conſidered only in a moral light, yet I could not reſiſt the temptation to make a ſhort extract from ſuch a maſterly letter; and I do not think that any of my readers will be diſpleaſed at the peruſal of it. But I have ſtill leſs occaſion to make any

any apology for ſtating the author's opinion of the moſt effectual means of remedying the evil, as the leading feature of his plan of reform exactly correſponds with what I recommended above thirty years ago. I was then lamenting, that poverty often obliged mothers to neglect their offspring, in order to procure the neceſſaries of life. I obſerved, that, in ſuch caſes, it became the intereſt as well as the duty of the public to aſſiſt them; but I contended that ten thouſand times more benefit would accrue to the ſtate, by enabling the poor to bring up their own children, than from all the hoſpitals that ever could be erected with that view. In a ſubſequent edition of thoſe remarks, I added, that, if it were made the intereſt of the poor to keep their children alive, we ſhould loſe very few of them; and that a ſmall premium given annually to each poor family, for every child they had alive at the year's end, would ſave more infant lives than

if

if the whole revenue of the crown were expended on hoſpitals for this purpoſe.

It gave me great pleaſure to find, that the writer juſt now quoted had reaſoned in the ſame manner on the hundreds of thouſands which had been expended, merely, he ſays, *to create foundlings;* the tenth part of which, if properly employed, would have been of infinitely more ſervice to ſociety. The proper mode of employing charitable contributions, he thinks, ſhould conſiſt chiefly in giving premiums to ſuch parents as have ſhewn moſt zeal and capacity in educating their children. Thus, notwithſtanding the different points of view in which we examined the abuſe of ſo important a part of public charities, the very means which I adviſed for ſaving the lives, and promoting the bodily health of infants, appeared to him the moſt conducive alſo to their intellectual and moral improvement.

The

The prejudices in favour of old inſtitutions muſt be ſtrong, indeed, when they can reſiſt the cleareſt evidence of facts, and the plain deductions of fair argument. Yet, in the queſtion before us, how the public, or the ſtate, may moſt effectually contribute to the nurſing and rearing of poor infants, one would ſuppoſe that no appeal to paſt experience, nor any great depth of reaſoning, were neceſſary to demonſtrate the impropriety of ſeparating children from their parents. Nature forms the chain that binds them; and, if poſſible, it ſhould never be broken. I have ſhewn how the lives of the mother and child are entwined, not only during pregnancy, but after delivery. To part them, is to endanger the health and the exiſtence of both. They are equally neceſſary to each other's well-being; and the longer they are kept together, the more ſenſible they become of the duties they owe to one another, which, when faithfully diſcharged, tend greatly to increaſe the ſum of human happineſs.

But

But how are we to expect that any regard will be paid to this doctrine by narrow-minded unfeeling overſeers of the poor, who make a greater merit of of ſaving a ſhilling to their pariſh, than of ſaving fifty lives to the community? We now and then hear of inſtances of ſuch perſons being dragged into our courts of juſtice, to anſwer for their cruelty to pregnant women; but no account is kept, and of courſe no cognizance can be taken of the immenſe number of infants that are torn, in our parochial receptacles, from the arms of their diſtreſſed mothers, and are conſigned to an untimely death, or to certain debility and protracted wretchedneſs. Even the ſhow of humanity in ſome of thoſe places, ſerves only to excite our ſtronger indignation. It is a cobweb, through which the penetrating eye can eaſily ſee written up in letters of blood, CHILDREN MURDERED HERE UNDER THE SANCTION OF CHARITY

Are

Are we not always ſhocked at reading or hearing any accounts of the barbarous policy that prevails in China, where avaricious as well as diſtreſſed parents are encouraged by the permiſſion of the law, and by the force of example, to deſtroy their female children, in order to avoid the expence of rearing them? And is there a father or a mother in Great Britain, who would not join in a general outcry againſt an act of parliament for the immediate drowning of all infants taken to pariſh workhouſes? Yet, humanity itſelf muſt acknowledge, that inſtant death is infinitely preferable to a lingering exiſtence in a ſtate of pain, of miſery, of continual ſuffering and diſeaſe. I do not, therefore, heſitate to aſſert, that ſuch policy as that of the Chineſe, or ſuch an act of parliament as I have now mentioned, would, in reality, be an act of mercy, contraſted with the preſent moſt barbarous, moſt inhuman, and moſt deteſtable method of taking care, as it is falſely called,

of poor infants thrown upon the pariſh.

Nothing was left undone by the late JONAS HANWAY to probe this ſore to the bottom. He ſpared neither time, pains, nor expence, to procure the fulleſt information on the ſubject, before he publiſhed his "Plea for mercy to the Children of the Poor." He there ſtates, as the reſult of his inquiries and calculations, that not more than one in ſeventy of the children conſigned to the pariſh, ever attained to mature age; and that even that one ſeldom became an uſeful member of the community. Among many inſtances of the moſt horrid nature, he takes notice of a memorandum he met with in the books of a certain pariſh, where the names of particular nurſes were inſerted, with the remark of their being "*excellent killing nurſes.*" This teſtimonial of their expertneſs in murder, was deemed by the overſeers, who had tried them, the

ſtrongeſt recommendation to conſtant employment.

Let it not be ſuppoſed, that I mean to involve all overſeers of the poor in one general charge of infanticide. I know ſeveral of them to be very amiable and tender-hearted men, who would do every thing in their power to promote the ends of true charity and the real intereſts of humanity, were they not tied down by the eſtabliſhed rules of their office. That part of the inſtitution which relates to the nurſing and rearing of children, being radically wrong, the moſt zealous exertions of any individual, during his ſhort continuance in office, will operate but as a temporary palliative of an evil in its own nature incurable. It is not a partial reform, but a total change of ſyſtem, that can in ſuch caſes be productive of any good effect.

The ſupporters of Foundling Hoſpitals may imagine, that a juſtification of their plan is implied even in my cen-

ſures of parochial eſtabliſhments for poor children. They may ſay, that the laudable end of their charity is not to ſeparate infants from their mothers, but to provide for thoſe from whom cruel and unnatural mothers have ſeparated themſelves. I before paid the juſt tribute of applauſe to the ſpirit of ſuch an inſtitution, and to its profeſſed objects; but I lamented the abuſes which had ariſen out of it, or rather, which were inſeparably connected with the execution of the ſcheme. Its obvious tendency and its actual effect have been *to create foundlings*,—to encourage the deſertion of young children, whom many of their parents would never have conſigned to a receptacle of that ſort, but from cruel neceſſity, and from a vain hope that due care would be taken of the poor creatures. I have ſhewn the extent of that care, the dreadful ſweep of mortality which accompanied it, and its conſequent inſufficiency to promote the deſired end.

I would

I would not however have Foundling Hoſpitals entirely aboliſhed. I would endeavour, in the firſt place, to render them leſs neceſſary, by a method which I ſhall fully explain in the next chapter, and of which the great object will be to take away from poor mothers all temptation to abandon their children. But as ſome women may be prompted, by other motives than that of want, to deſtroy their young, let there be a receptacle ever open for the reſcue of ſuch victims, and for the prevention of ſuch unnatural crimes. If my plan for the relief of poverty, above hinted at, be carried into full effect, the number of foundlings of the latter deſcription will always be ſmall, and will not require any very expenſive eſtabliſhment. There will be no occaſion for ſhowy buildings —no room for lucrative jobs, offices, or appointments. Two or three truſtees, without ſalary or emolument, and actuated ſolely by humane and charitable motives, will be ſufficient to receive the

money, and to lay it out according to well-regulated and maturely-conſidered inſtructions. The preſent abuſes are very great and very flagrant; but the reform is very eaſy, if it be zealouſly undertaken and perſevered in by men of talents and virtue. I take it for granted that ſuch perſons will alſo poſſeſs dignity of mind enough to deſpiſe the wretched ſuggeſtions of ignorance, of prejudice, of envy, malignity, forbid intereſt, and diſappointed vanity.

The foregoing remarks are purpoſely confined to ſome of our moſt popular eſtabliſhments for the nurſing and rearing of children. It would lead me too far to enter into a detail of all the ſchemes which have aſſumed the like name of charitable inſtitutions in the neighbourhood of London alone. The former have at leaſt the merit of having been well intended; but moſt of the latter are founded in fraud, and have no other aim but to enrich ſome artful projector,

projector, at the expence of public credulity. This is an inexhauſtible fund for any man who can invent a quack medicine, a new mode of faith, or the plan of ſome ſpecious charity. We have ſeen footmen in the firſt department, coal-heavers in the ſecond, and ſwindlers in the third, driving their chariots with rival ſplendor and ſucceſs. But the victims of the laſt deception are moſt to be pitied, becauſe they are poor, innocent, and helpleſs children; while the dupes of the two firſt, being people of mature years and experience, cannot lay claim to any compaſſion for ſuffering not only their purſes, but their very ſouls and bodies, to be ſported with by ignorant and audacious impoſtors.

CHAP. X.

SKETCH OF A PLAN FOR THE PRESERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE HUMAN SPECIES.

WERE this ſubject to be diſcuſſed with a degree of extent ſuited to its importance, it would require a large volume. But I mean to touch only upon a few of the principal points, merely with the hope of exciting more general attention to a matter, which, though of the higheſt concern, has hitherto been very ſlightly conſidered. I ſhall not dwell upon truths which are obvious to almoſt every perſon of common underſtanding, that the reſources and ſtability of a ſtate depend upon the number, vigour, and induſtry of its ſubjects; and, on the contrary, that where little value is ſet on the increaſe of population, on the growth, health, or life of man, the

political fabric, however ſhowy, ſtands on a rotten foundation, and muſt ſooner or later ſink into an abyſs dug out of its own inhumanity. It is enough to mention theſe truths, in order to ſecure the ready aſſent of all thinking people; but the practical inferences to be drawn from them may admit of a great diverſity of opinions. The plan which I am about to propoſe, whether approved of or not, may be productive of one good effect at leaſt, that of exerciſing the ingenuity of others, and perhaps of directing public and private charity to more uſeful purpoſes than thoſe to which they are now applied.

I hope I need not go over the old ground again, or repeat my former arguments, to prove that there is not any law of nature ſo clear, ſo forcible, or ſo ſacred as that which ordains every mother to be the nurſe of her own young. The well-being of both, as I before obſerved, depends on the faithful diſcharge of

of this duty. Every attempt to divert the breaſt-milk from its proper channels, endangers the mother's life; and it is beyond the power of wealth to procure, or of art to deviſe, any nutriment ſo congenial to the conſtitution of the infant, as the very juices of which it is compoſed, and which have ſo long ſuſtained it in the womb. It is equally impoſſible to ſupply the tender care and unwearied attention of a parent; and the rich, who truſt to hirelings, find by woeful experience, that half their children periſh in early life. Is it a wonder, then, that a far greater mortality ſhould await the poor infants thrown upon the pariſh, or conſigned to an hoſpital, where no individual is intereſted in their preſervation? I have faithfully ſtated, as a matter which came within the ſphere of my own knowledge, that nine out of ten of the deſerted foundlings died before they attained to maturity; and it appears from Mr. HANWAY's unqueſtionable account, that ſixty-nine out of

ſeventy

ſeventy of the poor pariſh children periſh in the ſame untimely manner. Can it therefore be called charity to perſevere in meaſures which are ſo deſtructive to the population of the country?

I before ſuggeſted what appeared to me the beſt ſubſtitute for a Foundling Hoſpital, confined in its objects to the preſervation of ſuch children as might otherwiſe periſh by neglect, and of ſuch as may be deprived of their mothers at an early age by the "hand of fate." Poor orphans and deſerted infants being in the ſame predicament, though from different cauſes, muſt be reared by ſtrangers. The only expedient in theſe unavoidable deviations from nature, is to place the children under the care of nurſes of unexceptionable character, in a healthy part of the country, and not to take them away till of age to be put apprentices. This very circumſtance will prompt every nurſe to uſe her beſt endeavours to rear a child

who

who is to ſtay with her, if he thrives and does well, till he is fourteen years of age. It is the only chance of making a ſtranger acquire in time a maternal affection for her nurſling. It is alſo the only chance of a poor child's acquiring a good conſtitution, and that kind of early education which is beſt ſuited to rural employments.

But, for the relief of poor women, who in pregnancy may be expoſed to numberleſs afflictions, and who, after delivery, may often be forced to part with their children, I would not recommend either hoſpitals or pariſh workhouſes. Theſe receptacles are little better than half-way houſes, or conductors, to the grave. In their room, I would have a fund eſtabliſhed to afford indigent mothers every neceſſary comfort and aſſiſtance at their own habitations, during pregnancy as well as in childbed, and afterwards to enable them to nurſe and bring up their infants themſelves.

By

By theſe means more lives would be preſerved than by all the charitable inſtitutions now exiſting in this country, without coſting one half of the money, or alienating the hearts of children from their parents.

It is impoſſible, without heart-felt ſorrow, to think of the immenſe numbers of fine children that are loſt for want of a little timely aid to mothers. How many of theſe poor women pine with their offspring in obſcurity, and in unavailing ſtruggles for their ſupport! The dread of ill-treatment, of diſeaſes, of death, and (what is ſtill more terrible to a delicate mind) the dread of ſhame, keeps them from workhouſes and hoſpitals. Their groans are unheard —their wants unpitied—and they paſs like ſilent ſhadows to the grave!

How many others, no leſs tenderly attached to their young, are driven by extreme diſtreſs to leave them to the very

very uncertain care of others, and to hire out their own breaſts, and their own diſtracted, attention, to a ſtranger! When a mother abandons her child, to ſuckle that of another woman, one of the infants is almoſt ſure to die; and it frequently happens that both ſhare the ſame fate.

There is a third claſs of truly pitiable objects, though too often regarded with cruel indifference and contempt; I mean the poor women whom we daily ſee begging with two, three, or more children, and entirely dependant on ſo precarious a reſource for a morſel of bread. While theſe can lie under hedges, and get ſcraps of food, they may live; but ſhould a ſevere winter overtake them, when they muſt cling to the rock for ſhelter, they will all be loſt. It is not unlikely that many of thoſe poor infants may be the iſſue of men who have fought for their country; and that they were turned out of houſe and harbour, leſt they

ſhould

ſhould become troubleſome to the pariſh.

Can public or private charity be better employed than in preſerving ſo many lives to the ſtate? And how are they to be preſerved? Not by tearing the poor children from the arms of their mothers, and ſending them to hoſpitals and workhouſes, to be put under the care of "*excellent killing nurſes*;"— but by enabling the mothers to nurſe them agreeably to the deſigns of nature, and thus rendering fertility, not what it now is, a curſe to the poor, but the ſource of the ſweeteſt pleaſures, and the greateſt of all poſſible bleſſings. A very ſmall part of the vaſt ſums collected in this kingdom by taxes, under the title of poor rates, and by voluntary contributions, would be fully ſufficient for the propoſed fund; and I am perſuaded that the wiſdom and humanity of parliament and of government could not be better exerted, than in preparing and

carrying

carrying into effect either this, or ſome other more adviſable plan, for ſaving the lives of ſuch an incalculable number of devoted victims.

Vanity, as I before obſerved, has a very great ſhare in the erection and ſupport of alms-houſes; or the rich and the truly humane would readily diſcover, in the hints now given, a much more uſeful as well as a more charitable method of employing their ſuperfluous wealth. I hope, however, that the conſcious pleaſure of doing real good, will induce many ladies, bleſſed with affluence, to aſſiſt poor women to nurſe and rear their children in their own little huts or habitions, though not inſcribed on the outſide with any vain compliment to the pride of a patroneſs or a founder. Is not the ſight of a riſing family, who are indebted to you for health, and even for exiſtence, a thouſand times more gratifying to the human heart, than the ſilly oſtentation or parade of a public charity?

It

It would imply a very unbecoming doubt of the good ſenſe and natural feelings of my readers, to dwell any longer on this head; but many of them may think the other part of my plan, expreſſed in the title of the preſent chapter, and having for its avowed object *the improvement of the human ſpecies*, a little romantic. Yet, I flatter myſelf that I ſhall be able to prove, that there is nothing of fanciful or impracticable theory in the ſuggeſtion; and that the improvement, as well as the preſervation of the human ſpecies, may be effectually promoted by the ſame means—well-timed aſſiſtance, and proper encouragement to mothers.

In the firſt chapter of this work I threw out ſome hints on the proper choice of wives and of huſbands, with a view to the procreation of a healthy and vigorous iſſue; and I lamented, that the impulſes of natural inclination were too often checked in civilized ſociety by the meaner paſſions of avarice

and falſe pride. I alſo took notice of caſes in which marriage had been forbidden by the legiſlators of different countries. But though it would be difficult to frame, and to enforce any complete ſyſtem of laws for regulating the union of the ſexes; and though ſuch legal reſtraints on marriages would be incompatible with the liberty of individuals in a free government like ours, yet it is in the power of every ſtate to encourage the rearing of fine children, by granting to every mother a premium annually, in proportion to the age and number of the healthy children ſhe brought up. The proſpect of a liberal and honourable reward at the end of every year, would encourage mothers to exert all their ſkill, and uſe every endeavour to rear a numerous and healthy offspring. It would excite a general emulation among mothers; and the object of the virtuous ſtruggle would be, who ſhould have the fineſt children. The name of CORNELIA, that famous Roman mother, would no longer ſtand

alone on the records of maternal affection; but Engliſh women, when requeſted to ſhew their jewels or their brighteſt ornaments, would throw open the nurſery, and exhibit a lovely family to the ſpectator's admiring gaze.

Let it not be frivoloufly objected, that a fond mother cannot want, or cannot feel a ſtronger ſtimulus, than natural affection, to make her take care of her child. Poor women are forced by keen diſtreſs to neglect their infants, in order to earn a bit of bread. They require therefore preſent ſupplies, and the aſſurance of a future reward; not merely to induce them, but in fact to enable them to beſtow more time and attention upon this one important object. Again, then, I muſt aſſert, that a part of the public money, as well as of private charitable contributions, cannot be applied to a better purpoſe, than to the eſtabliſhment of a fund for the ſupport and encouragement of ſuch mothers. The good effects of this plan would far ex-

ceed any preſent conjecture or calculation. The population of the country would increaſe with almoſt inconceivable rapidity. Inſtead of punineſs, deformity, diſeaſes, and early deaths, the riſing generation would be diſtinguiſhed for their health, beauty, and vigour; and we ſhould ſoon ſee a ſtout and hardy race ſpring up, to repay with uſury, in valuable ſervices to the ſtate, the ſums expended in nurſing and rearing them. I do not know any one inſtitution upon earth, in which humanity and enlightened policy would be found more happily united.

The effects of premiums have been proved in a variety of other inſtances, ſuch as the culture of vegetables, the growth of flax, of hemp, of potatoes, the planting of trees, and the improvement of the breed of cattle. Is it not a matter of juſt ſurpriſe that no attention of this ſort ſhould ever have been paid to the perſonal or bodily improvement of the human ſpecies? We know that the moſt

tender plant is not more ſuſceptible of any ſhape or form than infant man. We know that his ſtrength and figure are certainly as improvable as thoſe of any other animal, were proper methods purſued for the accompliſhment of ſuch deſirable purpoſes. Yet the breed of men is alone neglected, while every effort of ingenuity is called forth, and the reſources of wealth are exhauſted, in experiments to improve the breed of ſheep, of horſes, and of oxen!

I never met with more than one man who took up this ſubject on a ſerious ground. His plan was a good one had he poſſeſſed ſufficient means to carry it into execution. He propoſed to purchaſe a ſmall iſland, and to plant it with as many people of both ſexes as it would very comfortably maintain, Of theſe, he meant to ſuperintend the diet, occupations, marriages, and the management of their children, with a view to try how far the breed might be improved. It was a ſpeculation worthy

of an enlarged mind. Were every perſon of landed property in the kingdom of this gentleman's way of thinking, and could our country ſquires in particular be induced to pay half as much attention to the breed of men, as to that of dogs, horſes, and cattle, the progreſs of the human ſpecies to perfection would become more rapid, and more aſtoniſhing, than the degeneracy ſo often complained of in every ſucceſſive age.

Nor would this progreſſive improvement of man be confined to the body only; it would extend itſelf alſo to the mind. Every thing great or good in future life, muſt be the effect of early impreſſions; and by whom are thoſe impreſſions to be made but by mothers, who are moſt intereſted in the conſequences? Their inſtructions and example will have a laſting influence, and of courſe, will go farther to form the morals, than all the eloquence of the pulpit, the efforts of ſchoolmaſters, or the corrective power of the civil magiſtrate,

trate, who may, indeed, puniſh crimes, but cannot implant the ſeeds of virtue. If theſe are not ſown in childhood, they will never take deep root; and where they are not found to grow, every vice will ſpring up with baneful luxuriance.

In this view of the ſubject I could eaſily find a thouſand arguments to enforce the political importance of the plan which I have ſuggeſted; but I undertook only to ſhew, that perfect health and growth, that perſonal beauty and vigour, were moſt likely to be the fruits of the well-directed and well-encouraged care of mothers in the nurſing and rearing of their children. Other authors have enlarged on the culture of of the heart and the underſtanding, the firſt and chief part of which they all acknowledge to be the inconteſtible province of mothers. The eloquent writer whom I have repeatedly quoted, and who has taken ſome pains to illuſtrate this point, argues with great juſtneſs, that, if the early part of education,

which concerns us moſt, had been deſigned for fathers, the Author of nature would doubtleſs have furniſhed them with milk for the nouriſhment of their children. It is in concurrence with his opinion, that I have addreſſed this little book of inſtructions to females; and as he has very beautifully compared infant man to a ſhrub expoſed to numberleſs injuries in the highway of life, I ſhall join him in calling on the tender and provident mother, to preſerve the riſing ſhrub from the ſhocks of human prejudice. I ſhall ſay to her, almoſt in his words, *Cultivate, water the young plant before it die; ſo ſhall its fruit be hereafter delicious to your taſte. Erect an early fence round the diſpoſition of your child; others may delineate its extent; but it remains with you only to raiſe the barrier.*

APPENDIX.

WHEN I firſt turned my attention to the nurſing and management of children, the late Dr. CADOGAN's pamphlet on that ſubject fell into my hands. I peruſed it with great pleaſure, but ſoon loſt it: and though I have been in queſt of it for above forty years, I never could ſet my eyes upon it till within theſe few days; which makes me conclude that it is out of print. That ſo valuable a fragment may not be loſt, I ſhall inſert the principal part of it in this Appendix; and I hope it will render the book more extenſively uſeful, and, at the ſame time, tend to corroborate my ſentiments concerning mothers.

"In my opinion," ſays the ingenious writer whom I am now quoting, "the buſineſs of nurſing has been too long fatally left to the management of women, who cannot be ſuppoſed to have proper knowledge to fit them for ſuch a taſk, notwithſtanding they look upon it to be their own province. What I mean is, a philoſophic knowledge

ledge of nature, to be acquired only by learned obſervation and experience, and which therefore the unlearned muſt be incapable of. They may preſume upon the examples and tranſmitted cuſtoms of their great grandmothers, who were taught by the phyſicians of their unenlightened days; when phyſicians, as appears by late diſcoveries, were miſtaken in many things, being led away by hypothetical reaſonings to entertain very wild conceits, in which they were greatly bewildered themſelves, and miſled others to believe I know not what ſtrange unaccountable powers in certain herbs, roots, and drugs; and alſo in ſome ſuperſtitious practices and ceremonies; for all which notions there being no real foundation in nature, they ought to be looked upon as the effects of ignorance, or the artifices of deſigning quacks, who found their account by pretending to great knowledge in theſe occult qualities, and impoſing upon the credulous. The art of phyſic has been much improved within this laſt century: by obſerving and following nature more cloſely, many uſeful diſcoveries have been made, which help us to account for things in a natural way, that before ſeemed myſterious and magical, and which have conſequently made the practice of it more comformable to reaſon and good ſenſe. This being the caſe, there is great room to fear, that thoſe nurſes, who yet retain many of theſe traditional prejudices,

prejudices, are capitally miſtaken in their management of children in general, and, fancying that nature has left a great deal to their ſkill and contrivance, often do much harm where they intend to do good. Of this I ſhall endeavour to convince them, by ſhewing how I think children may be clothed, fed, and managed, with much leſs trouble to their nurſes, and infinitely greater eaſe, comfort, and ſafety, to the little ones.

* * * * * * * *

" When a man takes upon him to contradict received opinions and prejudices ſanctified by time, it is expected he ſhould bring valid proof of what he advances. The truth of what I ſay, that the treatment of children in general is wrong, unreaſonable, and unnatural, will in a great meaſure appear, if we but conſider what a puny valetudinary race moſt of our people of condition are, chiefly owing to bad nurſing, and bad habits contracted early. But let any one who would be fully convinced of this matter, look over the Bills of Mortality. There he may obſerve, that almoſt half the number of thoſe who fill up that black liſt, die under five years of age: ſo that half the people that come into the world, go out of it again before they become of the leaſt uſe to it, or themſelves. To me this ſeems to deſerve ſerious conſideration; and yet I can-

I cannot find, that any one man of ſenſe and public ſpirit has ever attended to it at all; notwithſtanding the maxim in every one's mouth, that a multitude of inhabitants is the greateſt ſtrength and beſt ſupport of a commonwealth. The miſconduct, to which I muſt impute a great part of the calamity, is too common and obvious to engage the idle and ſpeculative, who are to be caught only by very refined reſearches; and the buſy part of mankind, where their immediate intereſt is not concerned, will always overlook what they ſee daily: it may be thought a natural evil, and ſo is ſubmitted to without examination. But this is by no means the caſe; and where it is entirely owing to miſmanagement, and poſſibly may admit of a remedy, it is ridiculous to charge it upon nature, and ſuppoſe that infants are more ſubject to diſeaſe and death, than grown perſons; on the contrary, they bear pain and diſeaſe much better, fevers eſpecially (as is plain in the caſe of the ſmall-pox, generally moſt favourable to children), and for the ſame reaſon that a twig is leſs hurt by a ſtorm than an oak. In all the other productions of nature, we ſee the greateſt vigour and luxuriancy of health, the nearer they are to the egg or the bud; they are indeed then moſt ſenſible of injury, and it is injury only that deſtroys them. When was there a lamb, a bird, or a tree, that died becauſe it was young? Theſe are under the immediate nurſing

nurſing of unerring nature, and they thrive accordingly. Ought it not therefore to be the care of every nurſe and every parent, not only to protect their nurſlings from injury, but to be well aſſured that their own officious ſervices be not the greateſt the helpleſs creatures can ſuffer?

"In the lower claſs of mankind, eſpecially in the country, diſeaſe and mortality are not ſo frequent, either among the adult or their children. Health and poſterity are the portion of the poor, I mean the laborious. The want of ſuperfluity confines them more within the limits of nature: hence they enjoy bleſſings they feel not, and are ignorant of their cauſe. The mother, who has only a few rags to cover her child looſely, and little more than her own breaſt to feed it, ſees it healthy and ſtrong, and very ſoon able to ſhift for itſelf; while the puny infect, the heir and hope of a rich family, lies languiſhing under a load of finery that overpowers his limbs, abhorring and rejecting the dainties he is crammed with, till he dies a victim to the miſtaken care and tenderneſs of his fond mother. In the courſe of my practice, I have had frequent occaſion to be fully ſatisfied of this; and have often heard a mother anxiouſly ſay, *the child has not been well ever ſince it has done puking and crying*. Theſe complaints, though not attended to,

point

point very plainly to their cauſe. Is it not very evident when a child rids its ſtomach ſeveral times in a day, that it has been overloaded?—When it cries, from the incumbrance and confinement of its cloaths, that it is hurt by them? While the natural ſtrength laſts, (as every child is born with more health and ſtrength than is generally imagined,) it cries at or rejects the ſuperfluous load, and *thrives apace;* that is, grows very fat, bloated, and diſtended beyond meaſure, like a houſe-lamb. But in time, the ſame oppreſſive cauſe continuing, the natural powers are overcome, being no longer able to throw off the unequal weight; the child, now not able to cry any more, languiſhes and is quiet. The misfortune is, theſe complaints are not underſtood; it is ſwaddled and crammed on, till, after gripes, purging, &c. it ſinks under both burdens into a convulſion-fit, and eſcapes any farther torture. This would be the caſe with the lamb, were it not killed when full fat.

"That the preſent mode of nurſing is wrong, one would think needed no other proof than the frequent miſcarriages attending it, the death of many, and ill health of thoſe that ſurvive. **** What I am going to complain of is, that children in general are over-cloathed and over-fed; and fed and cloathed improperly. To theſe cauſes I impute almoſt all their diſeaſes. But to be

be a little more explicit. The firſt great miſtake is, that they think a new-born infant cannot be kept too warm: from this prejudice they load and bind it with flannels, wrappers, ſwathes, ſtays, &c. which all together are almoſt equal to its own weight; by which means a healthy child in a month's time is made ſo tender and chilly, it cannot bear the external air; and if, by any accident of a door or a window left careleſsly open too long, a refreſhing breeze be admitted into the ſuffocating atmoſphere of the lying-in bed-chamber, the child and mother ſometimes catch irrecoverable colds: but, what is worſe than this, at the end of the month, if things go on apparently well, this hot-bed plant is ſent out into the country to be reared in a leaky houſe, that lets in wind and rain from every quarter. Is it any wonder the child never thrives afterwards? The truth is, a new-born child cannot well be too cool and looſe in its dreſs: it wants leſs cloathing than a grown perſon in proportion, becauſe it is naturally warmer, as appears by the thermometer, and would therefore bear the cold of a winter's night much better than any adult perſon whatever. There are many inſtances, both ancient and modern, of infants expoſed and deſerted, that have lived ſeveral days; as it was the practice in ancient times, in many parts of the world, to expoſe all thoſe whom the parents did not care to be encumbered with; that

were

were deformed, or born under evil ſtars; not to mention the many foundlings picked up in London ſtreets. Theſe inſtances may ſerve to ſhew, that nature has made children able to bear even great hardſhips, before they are made weak and ſickly by their miſtaken nurſes. But, beſides the miſchief ariſing from the weight and heat of theſe ſwadding-cloaths, they are put on ſo tight, and the child is ſo cramped by them, that its bowels have not room, nor the limbs any liberty, to act and exert themſelves in the free eaſy manner they ought. This is a very hurtful circumſtance; for limbs that are not uſed will never be ſtrong, and ſuch tender bodies cannot bear much preſſure: the circulation reſtrained by the compreſſion of any one part, muſt produce unnatural ſwellings in ſome other, eſpecially as the fibres of infants are ſo eaſily diſtended. To which, doubtleſs, are owing the many diſtortions and deformities we meet with every where; chiefly among women, who ſuffer more in this particular than the men.

"If nurſes were capable of making juſt obſervations, they might ſee and take notice of that particular happineſs, which a child ſhews by all its powers of expreſſion, when it is newly undreſſed. How pleaſed, how delighted it is with this new liberty, when indulged for a few minutes with the free uſe of its legs and arms! But

But this is not to laſt long: it is ſwaddled up as before, notwithſtanding its cries and complaints.

"I would recommend the following dreſs: a little flannel waiſtcoat, without ſleeves, made to fit the body, and tie looſely behind; to which there ſhould be a petticoat ſewed, and over this a kind of gown of the ſame material, or any other that is light, thin, and ſlimſy. The petticoat ſhould not be quite ſo long as the child, the gown a few inches longer; with one cap only on the head, which may be made double, if it be thought not warm enough. What I mean is, that the whole coiffure ſhould be ſo contrived, that it might be put on at once, and neither bind nor preſs the head at all: the linen as uſual. This I think would be abundantly ſufficient for the day; laying aſide all thoſe ſwathes, bandages, ſtays, and contrivances, that are moſt ridiculouſly uſed to cloſe and keep the head in its place, and ſupport the body. As if nature, exact nature, had produced her chief work, a human creature, ſo careleſsly unfiniſhed as to want thoſe idle aids to make it perfect. Shoes and ſtockings are very needleſs incumbrances, beſides that they keep the legs wet and naſty if they are not changed every hour, and often cramp and hurt the feet: a child would ſtand firmer, and learn to walk much ſooner, without

them. I think they cannot be neceſſary till it runs out in the dirt. There ſhould be a thin flannel ſhirt for the night, which ought to be every way quite looſe. Children in this ſimple, pleaſant dreſs, which may be readily put on and off without teazing them, would find themſelves perfectly eaſy and happy, enjoying the free uſe of their limbs and faculties, which they would very ſoon begin to employ when thus left at liberty. I would have them put into it as ſoon as they are born, and continued in it till they are three years old; when it may be changed for any other more genteel and faſhionable: though I could wiſh it was not the cuſtom to wear ſtays at all; not becauſe I ſee no beauty in the ſugar-loaf ſhape, but that I am apprehenſive it is often procured at the expence of the health and ſtrength of the body. There is an odd notion enough entertained about change, and the keeping of children clean. Some imagine that clean linen and freſh clothes draw, and rob them of their nouriſhing juices; I cannot ſee that they do any thing more than imbibe a little of that moiſture which their bodies exhale. Were it, as is ſuppoſed, it would be of ſervice to them; ſince they are always too abundantly ſupplied, and therefore I think they cannot be changed too often, and would have them clean every day; as it would free them from ſtinks and fourneſſes, which are not only offenſive, but very prejudicial to the tender ſtate of infancy.

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"The feeding of children properly, is of much greater importance to them than their clothing. We ought to take great care to be right in this material article, and that nothing be given them but what is wholeſome and good for them, and in ſuch quantity as the body calls for towards its ſupport and growth; not a grain more. Let us conſider what nature directs in the caſe: if we follow nature, inſtead of leading or driving it, we cannot err. In the buſineſs of nurſing, as well as phyſic, art is ever deſtructive, if it does not exactly copy this original. When a child is firſt born, there ſeems to be no proviſion at all made for it; for the mother's milk, as it is now managed, ſeldom comes till the third day; ſo that, according to this appearance of nature, a child would be left a day and a half, or two days, without any food. Were this really the caſe, it would be a ſufficient proof that it wanted none; as indeed it does not immediately; for it is born full of blood, full of excrement, its appetites not awake, nor its ſenſes opened; and requires ſome intermediate time of abſtinence and reſt to compoſe and recover the ſtruggle of the birth, and the change of circulation (the blood running into new channels) which always put it into a little fever. However extraordinary this might appear, I am ſure it would be better that the child was not fed even all that time, than as it generally is fed; for it would ſleep the greateſt part of the time, and, when the

milk was ready for it, would be very hungry, and ſuck with more eagerneſs; which is often neceſſary, for it ſeldom comes freely at firſt. But let me endeavour to reconcile this difficulty, that a child ſhould be born thus apparently unprovided for: I ſay apparently, for in reality it is not ſo. Nature neither intended that a child ſhould be kept ſo long faſting, nor that we ſhould feed it for her. Her deſign is broke in upon, and a difficulty raiſed that is wholly owing to miſtaken management. The child, as ſoon as it is born, is taken from the mother, and not ſuffered to ſuck till the milk comes of itſelf; but is either fed with ſtrange and improper things, or put to ſuck ſome other woman, whoſe milk flowing in a full ſtream, overpowers the newborn infant, that has not yet learned to ſwallow, and ſets it a coughing, or gives it a hiccup: the mother is left to ſtruggle with the load of her milk, unaſſiſted by the ſucking of the child. Thus two great evils are produced, the one a prejudice to the child's health, the other the danger of the mother's life; at leaſt the retarding her recovery, by cauſing what is called a milk-fever; which has been thought to be natural, but ſo far from it, that it is entirely owing to this miſconduct. I am confident from experience, that there would be no fever at all, were things managed rightly; were the child kept without food of any kind till it was hungry, which it is impoſſible it ſhould be juſt after the birth, and

then applied to the mother's breaſts: it would ſuck with ſtrength enough, after a few repeated trials, to make the milk flow gradually, in due proportion to the child's unexerciſed faculty of ſwallowing, and the call of its ſtomach. Thus the child would not only provide for itſelf the beſt of nouriſhment, but, by opening a free paſſage for it, would take off the mother's load, as it increaſed, before it could oppreſs or hurt her; and therefore effectually prevent the fever, which is cauſed only by the painful diſtention of the lacteal veſſels of the breaſts, when the milk is injudiciouſly ſuffered to accumulate. Here let me deſcribe a caſe of pure nature, in order to illuſtrate this material point yet farther. When a healthy young woman lies-in of her firſt child, before the operations of nature have been perverted by any abſurd practices, her labour would be ſtrong, and, as I have choſen to inſtance in the caſe of a firſt child, perhaps difficult; but in a few minutes after her delivery, ſhe and her child, if it be not injured, would fall into a ſweet ſleep of ſix or ſeven hours: the mother, if no poiſonous opiate has been unneceſſarily given her, would awake refreſhed, the child hungry. A little thin broth with bread, or ſome ſuch light food, ſhould be then given her; and ſoon after the child be put to ſuck. In one hour or two the milk would infallibly flow; and, if nothing elſe be given it, the child would grow ſtrong,

and ſhe recover perfectly in a few days. This is the conſtant courſe of nature, which is very little attended to, and never followed. The general practice is, as ſoon as a child is born, to cram a dab of butter and ſugar down its throat, a little oil, panada, caudle, or ſome ſuch unwholeſome meſs. So that they ſet out wrong, and the child ſtands a fair chance of being made ſick from the firſt hour. It is the cuſtom of ſome to give a little roaſt pig to an infant, which, it ſeems, is to cure it of all the mother's longings. Much nonſenſe has been propagated, and believed, about women's longings, without any foundation in truth and nature. I wiſh theſe matters were a little more inquired into, for the honour of the ſex, to which many imperfections of this kind are imputed, which I am ſure it does not lie under.

" Hence I may be aſked, what is to be done with a child born ſick, that, inſtead of ſleeping, cries inceſſantly from the birth, and is hardly to be quieted by any means? Let good care be taken that it is not hurt by the dreſſing, or rather let it not be dreſſed at all, but wrapped up in a looſe flannel. If, notwithſtanding this precaution, it ſtill continues crying; inſtead of feeding it, for it is certainly a prepoſterous thing to think of feeding a child becauſe it is ſick though poſſibly this may ſtop its mouth for a

little while, let it be applied to the mother's breaſt, perhaps it may bring the milk immediately, which would be the beſt medicine for it in ſuch a caſe; or the nipple in its mouth may quiet it, though it does not bring it. And it is certainly better it ſhould be quieted without food than with it, which muſt neceſſarily make it worſe. Sometimes indeed the child may be ſo very ill, that it will not even attempt to ſuck. In ſuch a caſe, which I think can happen but rarely, let the phyſic I ſhall recommend a little farther on, where children are unavoidably to be dry-nurſed, be given, a little every hour, till it takes effect, ſtill attempting to bring it to ſuck the mother's milk, which is the beſt phyſic or food it can take.

" When a child ſucks its own mother, which, with a very few exceptions, would be beſt for every child and every mother, nature has provided it with ſuch wholeſome and ſuitable nouriſhment, ſuppoſing her a temperate woman that makes ſome uſe of her limbs, it can hardly do amiſs. The mother would likewiſe, in moſt hyſterical nervous caſes, eſtabliſh her own health by it, though ſhe were weak and ſickly before-as well as that of her offspring. For theſe reaſons I could wiſh, that every woman that is able, whoſe fountains are not greatly diſturbed or tainted, would give ſuck to her child. I am

very ſure that forcing back the milk, which moſt young women muſt have in great abundance, may be of fatal conſequence: ſometimes it endangers life, and often lays the foundation of many incurable diſeaſes. The reaſons that are given for this practice are very frivolous, and drawn from falſe premiſes; that ſome women are too weak to bear ſuch a drain, which would rob them of their own nouriſhment. This is a very miſtaken notion; for the firſt general cauſe of moſt people's diſeaſes is, not want of nouriſhment, as is here imagined, but too great fulneſs and redundancy of humours; good at firſt, but being more than the body can employ or conſume, they ſtagnate, degenerate, and the whole maſs becomes corrupt, and produces many diſeaſes. This is confirmed by the general practice of phyſicians, who make holes in the ſkin, perpetual bliſters, iſſues, &c. to let out the ſuperfluity. I would therefore leave it to be conſidered, whether the throwing back ſuch a load of humour, as a woman's firſt milk, be moſt likely to mend her conſtitution, or make her complaints irremediable. The mother's firſt milk is purgative, and cleanſes the child of its long-hoarded excrement; no child, therefore, can be deprived of it without manifeſt injury. By degrees it changes its property, becomes leſs purgative, and more nouriſhing; and is the beſt and only food the child likes, or ought to have

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for ſome time. If I could prevail, no child ſhould ever be crammed with any unnatural mixture, till the proviſion of nature was ready for it; nor afterwards fed with any ungenial alien diet whatever, at leaſt for the *firſt three months*: for it is not well able to digeſt and aſſimilate other aliments ſooner. I have ſeen very healthy fine children, that never ate or drank any thing whatever but the mother's milk for the firſt ten or twelve months. Nature ſeems to direct this, by giving them no teeth till about that time. There is uſually milk enough with the firſt child; ſometimes more than it can take: it is poured forth from an exuberant, overflowing urn, by a bountiful hand that never provides ſparingly. The call of nature ſhould be waited for to feed it with any thing more ſubſtantial, and the appetite ever precede the food; not only with regard to the daily meals, but thoſe changes of diet, which opening, increaſing life requires. But this is never done in either caſe, which is one of the greateſt miſtakes of all nurſes. Thus far nature, if ſhe be not interrupted, will do the whole buſineſs perfectly well; and there ſeems to be nothing left for a nurſe to do, but to keep the child clean and ſweet, and to tumble and toſs it about a good deal, play with it, and keep it in good humour.

" When the child requires more ſolid ſuſtenance, we are to inquire what, and how much

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is moſt proper to give it. We may be well aſſured there is a great miſtake either in the quantity or quality of children's food, or both, as it is uſually given them; becauſe they are made ſick by it; for to this miſtake I cannot help imputing nine in ten of all their diſeaſes. As to quantity, there is a moſt ridiculous error in the common practice; for it is generally ſuppoſed, that, whenever a child cries, it wants victuals; and it is accordingly fed ten, twelve, or more times in a day and night. This is ſo obvious a miſapprehenſion, that I am ſurpriſed it ſhould ever prevail. If a child's wants and motions be diligently and judiciouſly attended to, it will be found that it never cries but from pain: now the firſt ſenſations of hunger are not attended with pain; accordingly a child (I mean this of a very young one) that is hungry, will make a hundred other ſigns of its want, before it will cry for food. If it be healthy and quite eaſy in its dreſs, it will hardly ever cry at all. Indeed theſe ſigns and motions I ſpeak of are but rarely to be obſerved; becauſe it ſeldom happens that children are ever ſuffered to be hungry. In a few, very few, whom I have had the pleaſure to ſee reaſonably nurſed, that were not fed above two or three times in four and twenty hours, and yet were perfectly healthy, active, and happy, I have ſeen theſe ſignals, which were as intelligible as if they had ſpoken.

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"There are many faults in the quality of their food: it is not ſimple enough. Their paps, panadas, gruels, &c. are generally enriched with ſugar, ſpice, and ſometimes a drop of wine, neither of which they ought ever to taſte. Our bodies never want them: they are what luxury only has introduced, to the deſtruction of the health of mankind. It is not enough that their food be ſimple, it ſhould be alſo light. Several people, I find, are miſtaken in their notions of what is light; and fancy that moſt kinds of paſtry, puddings, cuſtards, &c. are light, that is, light of digeſtion. But there is nothing heavier in this ſenſe than unfermented flour and eggs boiled hard, which are the chief ingredients of thoſe preparations. What I mean by light, to give the beſt idea I can of it, is any ſubſtance that is eaſily ſeparated, and ſoluble in warm water. Good bread is the lighteſt thing I know: the power of due fermentation, in which conſiſts the whole art of making it, breaks and attenuates the tenacious particles of the flour ſo as to give it theſe qualities I mention, and make it the fitteſt food for young children. Cows milk is alſo ſimple and light, and very good for them; but it is injudiciouſly prepared: it ſhould not be boiled; for boiling alters the taſte and property of it, deſtroys its ſweetneſs, and makes it thicker, heavier, and leſs fit to mix and aſſimilate with the blood. But the chief objection is, that their food

food is wholly vegetable, the bad conſequence of which is, that it will turn ſour in their ſtomachs. The firſt and general cauſe of all the diſeaſes of infants is manifeſtly this aceſcent quality of all their food. If any of theſe vegetable preparations I have named, be kept in a degree of heat equal to that of a child's ſtomach, it will become ſour as vinegar in a few hours time. Theſe things are therefore very improper to feed a child wholly with. Some part of its diet ſhould be contrived to have a contrary tendency; ſuch as we find only in fleſh, which is the direct oppoſite to acid, and tends to putrefaction. In a due mixture of theſe two extremes, correcting each other, conſiſts that ſalubrity of aliment our nature ſeems to require. As we are partly carnivorous animals, a child ought not to be fed wholly upon vegetables. The mother's milk, when it is perfectly good, ſeems to be this true mixture of the animal and vegetable properties, that agrees beſt with the conſtitution of a child, readily paſſes into good blood, requiring but a gentle exertion of the powers of circulation to break and ſubdue its particles, and make them ſmooth and round, and eaſily diviſible. I would adviſe therefore, that one half of infants' diet, be thin light broths, with a little bread or rice boiled in them; which laſt is not ſo aceſcent as any other kind of meal or flour. Theſe broths ſhould be made with the fleſh of full-grown animals, be-

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cauſe their juices are more elaborate; eſpecially if they have never been confined to be fatted. The juices of a young ox, taken from the plough, make the fineſt flavoured and moſt wholeſome ſoup. I believe it is for the ſame reaſon, the fleſh of all wild animals has a higher taſte than that of tame, ſaginated ones, and is therefore moſt agreeable to the palate of the luxurious: but this is to be underſtood of thoſe creatures that feed on corn or herbage. The other part of children's diet may be a little toaſted bread and water boiled almoſt dry, and then mixed with freſh milk not boiled *. This, without ſugar, ſpice, or any other pretended amendment whatever, would be perfectly light and wholeſome, of ſufficient nouriſhment, ſomething like milk from the cow, with the additional ſtrength and ſpirit of bread in it. Twice a day, and not oftener, a ſucking child ſhould be fed at firſt; once with the broth, and once with the milk thus prepared. As to the quantity at each time,

* The London bakers are ſuſpected of putting alum in their bread, which would be very pernicious to infants. Therefore ruſks, or the biſcuits called tops-and-bottoms, or rice, may be uſed inſtead of it. Theſe will not turn ſour ſo ſoon as common bread; which quality is undoubtedly an objection to uſing much of it, eſpecially when children are weakly. The ſafeſt and beſt method in my opinion is, not to feed them at all; at leaſt till they are ſix or eight months old. The fineſt children I ever ſaw lived wholly upon ſucking till after that age.

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its appetite muſt be the meaſure of that. Its hunger ſhould be ſatisfied, but no more; for children will always eat with ſome eagerneſs full as much as they ought: therefore it muſt be very wrong to go beyond that, and ſtuff them till they ſpew, as the common method is. They ſhould not be laid on their backs to be fed, but held in a ſitting poſture, that ſwallowing may be eaſier to them, and that they may the more readily diſcover when they have had enough. When they come to be about *ten or twelve months old*, and their appetite and digeſtion grow ſtrong, they may be fed three times a day; which I think they ought never to exceed their whole lives after. By night I would not have them fed or ſuckled at all, that they might at leaſt be hungry in a morning. It is this night-feeding that makes them ſo over-fat and bloated. If they be not uſed to it at firſt, and, perhaps, awaked on purpoſe, they will never ſeek it; and if they are not diſturbed from the birth, in a week's time they will get into a habit of ſleeping all or moſt part of the night very quietly, awaking poſſibly once or twice for a few minutes, when they are wet, and ought to be changed. Their meals, and, in my opinion, their ſucking too, ought to be at ſtated times, and the ſame every day; that the ſtomach may have intervals to digeſt, and the appetite return. The child would ſoon be quite eaſy and ſatisfied in the habit; much

much more ſo than when taught to expect food at all times, and at every little fit of crying or uneaſineſs. Let this method be obſerved about a *twelvemonth*, when, and not before, they may be weaned; not all at once, but by inſenſible degrees; that they may neither feel, nor fret at, the want of the breaſt. This might be very eaſily managed, if they were ſuffered to ſuck only at certain times. Were this plan of nurſing literally purſued, the children kept clean and ſweet, tumbled and toſſed about a good deal, and carried out every day in all weathers, I am confident, that, in ſix or eight months time, moſt children would become healthy and ſtrong, would be able to ſit up on the ground without ſupport, to divert themſelves an hour at a time, to the great relief of their nurſes; would readily find the uſe of their legs, and very ſoon ſhift for themſelves.

"If it be aſked, whether I mean this of children in general, and that weakly ones, born of unhealthy parents, ſhould be treated in the ſame manner; I anſwer, that it is not ſo common for children to inherit the diſeaſes of their parents, as is generally imagined: there is much vulgar error in this opinion; for people that are very unhealthy ſeldom have children, eſpecially if the bad health be of the female ſide; and it is generally late in life when chronic diſeaſes take place

place in moſt men, when the buſineſs of love is pretty well over: certainly children can have no title to thoſe infirmities which their parents have acquired by indolence and intemperance long after their birth. It is not common for people to complain of ails they think hereditary, till they are grown up; that is, till they have contributed to them by their own irregularities and exceſſes, and then are glad to throw their own faults back upon their parents, and lament a bad conſtitution when they have ſpoiled a very good one. It is very ſeldom that children are troubled with family diſtempers. Indeed, when we find them affected with ſcrophulous or venereal complaints, we may reaſonably conclude the taint to have been tranſmitted to them; but theſe caſes are very rare, in compariſon of the many others that are falſely, and without the leaſt foundation, imputed to parents; when the real cauſe is either in the complainants themſelves, or bad nurſing, that has fixed them early in bad habits. In one ſenſe, many diſeaſes may be ſaid to be hereditary, perhaps all thoſe of malformation, by which I mean not only deformity and diſtortion, but all thoſe caſes where the fibres and veſſels of one part are weaker in proportion than the reſt; ſo that upon any ſtrain of the body, whether of debauch or too violent exerciſe, the weak part fails firſt, and diſorders the whole. Thus complaints may be produced

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ſimilar to thoſe of the parent, owing in ſome meaſure to the ſimilitude of parts, which poſſibly is inherited like the features of the face; but yet theſe diſeaſes might never have appeared, but for the immediate acting cauſe, the violence done to the body. Moſt diſtempers have two cauſes: the one, a particular ſtate of the ſolids and fluids of the body, which diſpoſe it to receive certain infections and impulſes; the other, the infection or impulſe itſelf. Now what I contend for is, that though this prediſponent ſtate or habit of the body be heritable, yet the diſeaſes incident to theſe wretched heirs may be avoided, by preventing the active cauſe; which may be done in many caſes by a due attention to the non-naturals, as they are called; in plainer words, by a temperate, active life; in children, by good nurſing. Therefore I conclude, that, inſtead of indulging and enfeebling yet more by the common methods, children ſo unhappily born, what I am recommending, together with the wholeſome milk of a healthy nurſe, is the beſt, the only means to remedy the evil, and by which alone they may by degrees be made healthy and ſtrong. And thus, in a generation or two of reaſonable temperate perſons, every taint and infirmity whatever, the king's evil and madneſs not excepted, would be totally worn out.

"The plain natural plan I have laid down is never followed, becauſe moſt mothers, of any condition, either cannot, or will not undertake the troubleſome taſk of ſuckling their own children; which is troubleſome only for want of proper method: were it rightly managed, there would be too much pleaſure in it, to every woman that can prevail upon herſelf to give up a little of the beauty of her breaſt to feed her offſpring; though this is a miſtaken notion, for the breaſts are not ſpoiled by giving ſuck, but by growing fat. There would be no fear of offending the huſband's ears with the noiſe of the ſqualling brat. The child, was it nurſed in this way, would be always quiet, in good humour, ever playing, laughing, or ſleeping. In my opinion, a man of ſenſe cannot have a prettier rattle (for rattles he muſt have of one kind or other) than ſuch a young child. I am quite at a loſs to account for the general practice of ſending infants out of doors, to be ſuckled or dry-nurſed by another woman, who has not ſo much underſtanding, nor can have ſo much affection for it, as the parents; and how it comes to paſs, that people of good ſenſe and eaſy circumſtances will not give themſelves the pains to watch over the health and welfare of their children, but are ſo careleſs as to give them up to the common methods, without conſidering how near it is to an equal chance that they are deſtroyed by them.

them. The ancient cuſtom of expoſing them to wild beaſts, or drowning them, would certainly be a much quicker and more humane way of diſpatching them. There are ſome, however, who wiſh to have children, and to preſerve them, but are miſtaken in their cares about them. To ſuch only I would addreſs myſelf, and earneſtly recommend it to every father to have his child nurſed under his own eye; to make uſe of his own reaſon and ſenſe, in ſuperintending and directing the management of it; nor ſuffer it to be made one of the myſteries of the *Bona Dea*, from which the men are to be excluded. I would adviſe every mother that can, for her own ſake as well as her child's, to ſuckle it: if ſhe be a healthy woman, it will confirm her health; if weakly, in moſt caſes it will reſtore her. It need be no confinement to her, or abridgment of her time: four times in four and twenty hours will be often enough to give it ſuck; letting it have as much as it will ſuck out of both breaſts at each time. It may be fed and dreſſed by ſome handy reaſonable ſervant, that will ſubmit to be directed; whom, likewiſe, it may ſleep with. No other woman's milk can be ſo good for her child; and dry-nurſing I look upon to be the moſt unnatural and dangerous method of all; and, according to my obſervation, not one in three ſurvives it. To breed a child in this artificial manner, requires more knowledge of nature and the animal œconomy, than the beſt nurſe was ever miſtreſs of, as well

as more care and attention than is generally beſtowed on children: the ſkill of a good phyſician would be neceſſary to manage it rightly." * * * * * * * * * * *

The Doctor is here led to ſtate his opinion as to the precautions neceſſary to be taken in the choice of hired nurſes, and his reaſons why the children entruſted to their care ſhould be treated ſomewhat differently from thoſe who are nurſed in a more natural way, and ſuck their own mothers. He does not deem it enough that hired nurſes ſhould be clean and healthy: he looks upon their age as a material conſideration. "Thoſe," he ſays, "between twenty and and thirty are certainly of the beſt age; becauſe they will have more milk than the very young, and more and better than the old. But what," he thinks, "of the utmoſt conſequence is, that great regard ſhould be had to the time of their lying-in, and thoſe procured, if poſſible, who have not been brought to bed above two or three months." He juſtly obſerves, that "nature intending a child ſhould ſuck about a twelvemonth, the milk ſeldom continues good much longer;" and he adds, with a ſtill greater degree of evidence, "that, if a new-born infant be deprived of its own mother's milk, it ought undoubtedly to have what is moſt like it: the newer it is, the more ſuitable in all reſpects to its tender nature." * * * * *.

After cenſuring a very common practice with poor women, who, if they can get nurſe-children, will ſuckle two or three of them ſucceſſively with the ſame milk, he proceeds thus: "A nurſe ought to have great regard to her diet: it is not enough that ſhe be ſober and temperate; her food ſhould conſiſt of a proper mixture of fleſh and vegetables: ſhe ſhould eat one hearty meal of unſalted fleſh-meat every day, with a good deal of garden-ſtuff, and a little bread. Thin broth or milk would be beſt for her breakfaſt and ſupper. Her drink ſhould be ſmall-beer, or milk and water; but upon no account ſhould ſhe ever touch a drop of wine or ſtrong drink, much leſs any kind of ſpirituous liquors: giving ale or brandy to a nurſe is, in effect, giving it to the child; and it is eaſy to conclude what would be the conſequence." * * *

This equally candid and judicious writer does not enter upon his promiſed deſcription of the treatment proper for children put out to nurſe, without again reminding his readers, that the plan, which he would lay down, could he prevail, would be that of nature, excluding art and foreign aid entirely. "But," he adds, "when this is broke in upon, a little adventitious ſkill becomes indiſpenſibly neceſſary; that, if we are not perfectly right in following cloſely the deſign of nature, we may co-operate a little,

and not be totally wrong in counteracting it, as is too often the caſe. What I mean is, that every child, not allowed the mother's firſt milk, whether it be dry-nurſed or ſuckled by another woman, ſhould be purged in a day or two after the birth, and this purging continued for ſome time; not by regular doſes of phyſic that may operate all at once, but ſome lenient laxative ſhould be contrived, and given two or three times a day, ſo as to keep the child's body open for the firſt nine days, or fortnight; leſſening the quantity inſenſibly, till it be left off. It ſhould be ſo managed, that the operation of the artificial phyſic may reſemble that of the natural. This is ſo material, that, for want of it, moſt children within the firſt month break out in pimples all over: the nurſes call it the red-gum, and look upon it to be a natural thing, and that the children will be unhealthy that have it not. So indeed they will be in all likelihood; and it is better that theſe foulneſſes, which become acrid and hot by remaining too long in the body, ſhould be diſcharged through the ſkin, than not at all; or that they ſhould be lodged in the blood, or fall upon the vitals, to lay the foundation of numberleſs future evils; but it is chiefly owing to the neglect of this method at firſt. A child that ſucks its own mother, unleſs it be greatly over-fed, or kept too hot, will never be troubled with this humour at all." * * * * *

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The following is the form of the gentle purgative which the Doctor recommends to ſuch infants as have been deprived of the ſalutary operation of their mothers' milk:

"Take manna, pulp of caſſia, of each half an ounce: diſſolve them in about three ounces of thin broth. Let the child take two ſpoonfuls three times a day, varying the quantity according to the effect; which, at firſt, ought to be three or four ſtools in four and twenty hours."

Among other rules for the conduct of hired nurſes, this experienced phyſician particularly enjoins ſuch women "to keep the children awake by day, as long as they are diſpoſed to be ſo, and to amuſe and keep them in good humour all they can; not to lull and rock them to ſleep, or to continue their ſleep too long; which is only done to ſave their own time and trouble, to the great detriment of the children's health, ſpirits, and underſtanding." * * * * * Here he refers to his former obſervations on the changes to be gradually made in the diet of children, when they come to require more ſolid ſuſtenance than breaſt-milk; and he takes occaſion to introduce the following remarks:

"A child may be allowed any kind of mellow fruit, either raw, ſtewed, or baked; roots of all

all ſorts, and all the produce of the kitchen-garden. I am ſure all theſe things are wholeſome and good for them, and every one elſe, notwithſtanding the idle notion of their being windy, which they are *only* to very debauched ſtomachs; and ſo is milk: but no man's blood wants the cleanſing, refreſhing power of milk, more than his whoſe ſtomach, uſed to inflammatory things of high reliſh, will not bear the firſt chill of it. To children, all this kind of food, taken in moderation, is perfectly grateful and ſalutary. Some may think that they carry into the ſtomach the eggs of future worms: but of this I am not very apprehenſive; for I believe there are few things we eat or drink that do not convey them. But then they can never be hatched in a healthy inſide, where all the juices are ſweet and good, and every gland performs its office: the gall, in particular, would deſtroy them: bullocks' gall has been found to be a good and ſafe vermifuge. It is my opinion, we ſwallow the eggs of many little animals, that are never brought into life within us, except where they find a fit neſt or lodgment in the acid phlegm of vitiated humours of the ſtomach and bowels. Were theſe totally diſcharged every day, and the food of yeſterday employed in nouriſhment, and the ſuperfluity thrown off to the laſt grain, no worms could ever breed or harbour in our vitals. As ſoon as the children have any teeth, at ſix or eight months, they

they may by degrees be uſed to a little fleſh-meat; which they are always very fond of, much more ſo at firſt, than of any confectionary or paſtry wares, with which they ſhould never debauch their taſte."

I have elſewhere enlarged on the fatal effects of theſe palatable poiſons; and I am not without hopes that tender and rational mothers will pay ſome little attention to my warnings. A reform in this article alone—the total diſuſe of paſtry in the diet of young children—will go a great way towards preventing many of the worſt complaints to which they are ſubject.

From the above remarks on the proper food of infants, the Doctor makes a very natural tranſition to the conſideration of their diſeaſes. He begins with expoſing the abſurdity of popular errors and popular prejudices with reſpect to teething. "Breeding teeth," he ſays, "has been thought to be, and is fatal to many children; but I am confident this is not from nature, for it is no diſeaſe, or we could not be well in health till one or two and twenty, or later. Teeth are breeding the greateſt part of that time; and it is my opinion, the laſt teeth give more pain than the firſt, as the bones and gums they are to pierce are grown more firm and hard. But, whatever fever, fits, or other dangerous ſymptoms

ſymptoms ſeem to attend this operation of nature, healthy children have ſometimes bred their teeth without any ſuch bad attendants; which ought to incline us to ſuſpect the evil not to be natural, but rather the effect of too great a fulneſs, or the corrupt humours of the body put into agitation by the ſtimulating pain the tooth cauſes in breaking its way out. This, I believe, never happens without ſome pain, and poſſibly a little fever; but if the blood and juices be perfectly ſweet and good, and there be not too great a redundancy of them, both will be but ſlight, and paſs off imperceptibly, without any bad conſequence whatever. The chief intention of the method I am recommending is, to preſerve the humours of the body in this ſtate; and therefore, if it ſucceeds, children ſo managed will breed their teeth with leſs pain and danger than are commonly obſerved to attend this work of nature."

In ſupport of this opinion, I can ſtate from my own experience, that I have never known cutting the teeth, as it is called, attended with any pain of an alarming nature, except in caſes of previous diſeaſe, miſmanagement, or bad nurſing. Fevers, convulſion-fits, and other dangerous ſymptoms, are always, upon ſuch occaſions, the conſequences of an extreme fulneſs of the

the habit, a vitiated ſtate of the blood and juices, ſome conſtitutional weakneſs, or a great irritability of the nervous ſyſtem. The uſe alſo of corals, and the like hard ſubſtances, by rendering the gums callous, muſt oppoſe additional reſiſtance to the burſting tooth, and greatly increaſe the acuteneſs of the pain. But the Doctor's text requires no comment. I ſhall therefore reſume my quotation from his valuable pamphlet.

"As I have ſaid," continues he, "that the firſt and general cauſe of moſt of the diſeaſes infants are liable to, is the acid corruption of their food, it may not be amiſs juſt to mention an eaſy and certain remedy, or rather preventive, if given timely, at the firſt appearance of predominating acid; which is very obvious, from the crude white or green ſtools, gripes and purgings, occaſioned by it. The common method, when theſe ſymptoms appear, is to give the pearl-julep, crab's eyes, and the teſtaceous powders; which, though they do abſorb the acidities, have this inconvenience in their effect, that they are apt to lodge in the body, and bring on a coſtiveneſs very detrimental to infants, and therefore require a little manna, or ſome gentle purge, to be given frequently to carry them off. Inſtead of theſe, I would recommend a certain fine

fine inſipid powder, called *magneſia alba*, which, at the ſame time it corrects and ſweetens all ſourneſſes rather more effectually than the teſtaceous powders, is likewiſe a lenient purgative, and keeps the body gently open. This is the only alkaline purge I know of, and which our diſpenſatories have long wanted. I have taken it myſelf, and given it to others, for the heart-burn, and find it to be the beſt and moſt effectual remedy for that complaint. It may be given to children from one to two drams a day, a little at a time, in all their food, till the acidities be quite overcome, and the concomitant ſymptoms diſappear entirely. I have often given it with good and great effect, even when the children have been far gone in diſeaſes firſt brought on by prevailing acid.

" It is always eaſier to prevent diſeaſes than to cure them; and as neither children, nor indeed grown perſons, are ever ſeized with chronic diſeaſes ſuddenly, the progreſs of decaying health being perceptibly gradual, it is no difficult matter for a phyſician of common ſkill to obſerve the firſt ſtep towards illneſs, and to foretell the conſequence, in all thoſe whoſe habit of life is well known to him. But to parents and nurſes in general, theſe obſervations may not occur. I will therefore point out a few certain ſigns and ſymptoms, by which they may be aſſured, that a child's

a child's health is decaying, even before it appears to be ſick. If theſe are neglected, the evil increaſes, grows from bad to worſe, and more violent and apparent complaints will follow, and perhaps end in incurable diſeaſes, which a timely remedy, or a ſlight change in the diet and manner of life, had infallibly prevented. The firſt tendency to diſeaſe may be obſerved in a child's breath. It is not enough the breath be not offenſive: it ſhould be ſweet and fragrant like a noſegay of freſh flowers, or a pail of new milk from a young cow that feeds upon the ſweeteſt graſs of the ſpring; and this as well at firſt waking in the morning, as all day long. It is always ſo with children that are in perfect delicate health. As ſoon, therefore, as a child's breath is found to be either hot, or ſtrong, or ſour, we may be aſſured that digeſtion and ſurfeit have fouled and diſturbed the blood, and now is the time to apply a proper remedy, and prevent a train of impending evils. Let the child be reſtrained in its food; eat leſs; live upon milk or thin broth for a day or two; be carried, or walk if it is able, a little more than uſual in the open air. Let a little of this powder, or any other proper phyſic, be given; not that I would adviſe phyſic to be made familiar; but one doſe adminiſtered now, would prevent the neceſſity of a great many that might afterwards be preſcribed with much leſs good effect.

"If

" If this firſt ſymptom of approaching illneſs be overlooked, the child, who, if it was healthy, would lie quiet as a log all night, will have diſturbed ſleep, reſtleſſneſs, terrifying dreams; will be talking, ſtarting, kicking, and tumbling about; or ſmiling and laughing, as is common with very young children when they are griped; and the nurſes ſay they ſee and converſe with angels. After this will follow loſs of appetite and complexion, check of growth, decay of ſtrength, cough, conſumption, or elſe colics, gripes, worms, fits, &c. diſeaſes that require all the ſkill of a good phyſician; and happy for them, if the utmoſt he can employ will reſtore them to any degree of laſting health.

" There is one thing more which I forgot to mention in its proper place, and therefore I muſt take notice of it here; that is, the degree of exerciſe proper for children. This is of more conſequence than all the reſt; for, without it, all our care in feeding and clothing will not ſucceed to our wiſhes: but when by due degrees a child is brought to bear a good deal of exerciſe without fatigue, it is inconceivable how much impropriety and abſurdity in both thoſe articles it will endure unhurt. A child, therefore, ſhould be puſhed forwards, and taught to walk as ſoon as poſſible. A healthy child a year old will be able to walk alone. This we may call the

the æra of their deliverance; for this great difficulty ſurmounted, they generally do well, by getting out of the nurſe's hands to ſhift for themſelves. And here I muſt endeavour to correct a great miſtake, which is, that moſt people think it wrong to put weakly children upon their legs, eſpecially if they are the leaſt bent or crooked; but whoever will venture the experiment will ſurely find, that crooked legs will grow in time ſtrong and ſtraight by frequent walking, while diſuſe will make them worſe and worſe every day. As they grow daily more and more able, let their walks be gradually increaſed, till they can walk two miles on a ſtretch without wearineſs; which they will be very well able to do before they are three years old, if they are accuſtomed to it every day. To lead them ſuch a walk, ſhould be impoſed as an indiſpenſible taſk upon their maids, for to them it will be the higheſt pleaſure; ſo far from a burthen to them, that if they perform the daily duty, they will, from the impulſe of their own active vigour, be found running, leaping, and playing, all day long. Thus, a dull, heavy child may be made playful and ſprightly, a weakly one healthy and ſtrong, and confirmed in good habits and perpetual health.

"There are ſome other little niceties that, were they obſerved in the nurſing of children,

would be of ſome uſe to them; ſuch as making them lie ſtraight in the bed. I do not mean extended like a corpſe, but that their limbs may be free and eaſy. I have ſometimes ſeen children a year or two old lie doubled up in bed as in the womb, eſpecially in cold weather; and from the conſtraint of their poſture, fall into profuſe ſweats. This will be prevented if they are laid ſtraight; and ſleep relaxing all the muſcles of the body, the knees will naturally be bent a little. They ſhould be taught to uſe both hands alike; for employing one more than the other will not only make the hand and arm ſo uſed, but alſo that ſide of the body, bigger than the other. This is ſometimes the cauſe of crookedneſs. It would likewiſe not be amiſs to forward their ſpeaking plain, by ſpeaking plain diſtinct words to them, inſtead of the *namby-pamby* ſtyle, and giving them back their own broken inarticulate attempts; by which means, I believe, ſome children ſcarcely ſpeak intelligibly at ſeven years of age. I think they cannot be made reaſonable creatures too ſoon. * * * * * *

As this eſſay was written in the form of a letter, the Doctor concludes it with an apology to the gentleman to whom it was addreſſed, for the looſe manner in which the thoughts were laid before him. The writer very candidly confeſſes that he had "neither time nor patience to think of

of form and order, or ſupporting them by affected demonſtrations taken from mechanical principles and powers. "All I have endeavoured," ſays he, "is to be intelligible and uſeful; and therefore I have avoided, as much as poſſible, all terms of art; together with learned quotations, as often produced out of vanity, and to ſhew deep reading, as for the ſake of proof. * * * * * I ſhall only add, by way of perſuaſive to thoſe who may be inclined to make trial of the method I recommend, that I am a father, and have already practiſed it with the moſt deſirable ſucceſs."

In a poſtſcript to the tenth edition of this pamphlet, dated July 17th, 1769, the author expreſſes himſelf in the following manner:

"It is now above twenty years ſince I wrote the foregoing eſſay; and though I have made a a few alterations, it was only to explain thoſe paſſages that contained any apparent difficulty or obſcurity: I have never yet found cauſe to alter eſſentially any one opinion delivered in it. I have through the whole induſtriouſly laboured at the greateſt plainneſs and ſimplicity; and yet my meaning has been much miſtaken. Some have very ſtrangely expected to find in it the general cure of children's diſeaſes, though it be profeſſedly written only to prevent them, by

eſtabliſhing good health; a very different thing (whatever people may think) from the cure of diſeaſes. Sick or weak children, whether ſuch by nature, or made ſuch by bad nurſing, cannot perhaps be brought immediately into the habits here recommended, but muſt firſt be cured of their maladies by a ſkilful phyſician; who, if he be alſo an honeſt man, will introduce theſe, or ſimilar habits of management, to continue them in health and ſtrength. But in treating their diſeaſes, as well as in nurſing them, I am very ſure many capital errors are committed. I object greatly in particular to the frequent uſe of antimonial and mercurial medicines; which, though they give ſometimes a little temporary relief, by diſcharging crude and phlegmatic humours, killing worms, &c. I am very confident a repeated uſe of them breaks the blood, relaxes the fibres, and is every way deſtructive to the conſtitution of children. Preſent relief ſeems to be all that is deſired, and therefore all that is intended by medication: the ſlow, but permanent effects of good habits few have patience to expect. Others have neglected eſſentials, to lay ſtreſs only upon trifles. A lady of great ſway among her acquaintance told me not long ago, with an air of reproach, that ſhe had nurſed her child according to my book, and it died. I aſked, if ſhe had ſuckled it herſelf? No.—Had it ſucked any other woman?—It was dry-nurſed.—Then, madam, you cannot im-

pute your misfortune to my advice, for you have taken a method quite contrary to it in the moſt capital point.—Oh! but, according to my direction, it had never worn ſtockings.—Madam, children may die, whether they do or do not wear ſtockings." A ſtronger illuſtration could not be given of the folly of attending only to trifles, and acting diametrically oppoſite to the dictates of reaſon and experience in matters of the greateſt moment.

THE END.

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New-Street Square.